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*A Collection of Novels, Selected and
Revised by Mrs. Griffith*

Griffith (Elizabeth)

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Josephine Butler





John Taylor del. et sculp.

THE PRINCESS OF CLEVES.

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SELECTED AND REVISED BY
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CHARACTER

OF THE

PRINCESS OF CLEVES,

BY THE EDITOR.



THE story of the Princess of Cleves *, which we now present to our readers, has been long and universally allowed to stand foremost in that peculiar species of writing, where historical facts are intermixed with the anecdotes and adventures of private personages. The scene is laid in the court of France, at an era when galantry had risen to its greatest height in that polite nation; though the romantic notions of ancient chivalry had begun to grow obsolete, but were not yet intirely exploded; for we here meet with a tournament, appointed in honour of the princess Elizabeth's marriage with

* The original of this Novel is in French. The author has not put any name to the piece, and gives this modest reason for it; "That he would wait 'till he found how it was received by the public, before he would venture to declare himself." The secret has never since transpired.

In this uncertainty, every one is left at liberty to frame a conjecture about the Author; and, in my opinion, this work seems to have been written by some ingenious woman of the age in which it appeared; as the delicacy of sentiment, and peculiar nicety of manners, with which the princess of Cleves conducted herself in the most difficult situations, could only have arisen in the female breast. Men are not apt to imagine such refinements; and even, perhaps, less so to impute them to the sex.

the

CHARACTER, &c.

the king of Spain ; which, however, was the last that ever was exhibited in France.

From this particular circumstance, the reader may form an idea, that the manners and sentiments of those times differed widely from those of the present ; and of course, the delicacy with which the princess of Cleves and the duke of Nemours conducted themselves, though under the influence of an unjustifiable passion, ought not to be deemed unnatural, though, perhaps, in these more licentious days it may be supposed improbable.

There are some situations in the following Novel, more refined and elegant than any we ever remember to have met with before ; particularly, that of our heroine's flying for sanctuary, as it were, from herself, into the bosom of her husband, by revealing to him her passion for another. What a confidant for a modern dame ! The line which the princess of Cleves pursues through the whole story, is doubtless worthy of emulation to those who may be so unhappy as to stand in the same predicament ; but her conduct, after the death of her husband, will, we fear, rather be considered as a subject for admiration, than imitation.

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THE
P R I N C E S S
OF
C L E V E S.

P A R T I.

GRANDEUR and gallantry never appeared with more lustre in France, than in the last years of Henry the Second's reign. This prince was amorous and handsome, and though his passion for Diana of Poitiers, duchess of Valentinois, was of above twenty years standing, it was not the less violent, nor did he give less distinguishing proofs of it.

As he was happily turned to excel in bodily exercises, he took a particular delight in them, such as hunting, tennis, running at the ring, and the like diversions. Madam de Valentinois gave spirit to all entertainments of this sort, and appeared at them with grace and beauty equal to that of her grand-daughter, madam de la Marke, who was then unmarried; the queen's presence seemed to authorise her's.

The queen was handsome, though not young; she loved grandeur, magnificence and pleasure; she was
Vol. II. B married

married to the king while he was duke of Orleans, during the life of his elder brother, the dauphin, a prince whose great qualities promised in him a worthy successor of his father Francis the first.

The queen's ambitious temper made her taste the sweets of reigning, and she seemed to bear with perfect ease the king's passion for the duchess of Valentignis, nor did she express the least jealousy of it; but she was so skilful a dissembler, that it was hard to judge of her real sentiments, and policy obliged her to keep the duchess about her person, that she might draw the king to her at the same time. This prince took great delight in the conversation of women, even of such as he had no passion for; for he was every day at the queen's court, when she held her assembly, which was a concourse of all that was beautiful and excellent in either sex.

Never were finer women or more accomplished men seen in any court; and nature seemed to have taken pleasure in lavishing her greatest graces on the greatest persons. The princess Elizabeth, since queen of Spain, began now to manifest an uncommon wit, and to display those beauties which proved afterwards so fatal to her. Mary Stuart, queen of Scotland, who had just married the dauphin; and was called the queen-dauphin; had all the perfections of mind and body; she had been educated in the court of France, and had imbibed all the politeness of it; she was by nature so well formed to shine in every thing that was polite, that notwithstanding her youth, none surpassed her in the most refined accomplishments. The queen, her mother-in-law, and the king's sister, were also extreme lovers of music, plays, and poetry; for the taste which Francis the First had for the Belles Lettres was not yet extinguished in France; and as his son was addicted to exercises, no kind of pleasure was wanting at court. But what rendered this court so splendid, was the presence of so many great princes, and persons of the highest quality and merit: those I shall name, in their different characters,

characters, were the admiration and ornament of their age.

The king of Navarre drew to himself the respect of all the world, both by the greatness of his birth, and by the dignity that appeared in his person; he was remarkable for his skill and courage in war. The duke of Guise had also given proofs of extraordinary valour, and had been so successful, that there was not a general who did not look upon him with envy; to his valour he added a most exquisite genius and understanding, grandeur of mind, and a capacity equally turned for military or civil affairs. His brother, the cardinal of Loraine, was a man of boundless ambition, and of extraordinary wit and eloquence, and had besides acquired a vast variety of learning, which enabled him to make himself very considerable by defending the Catholic religion, which began to be attacked at that time. The chevalier de Guise, afterwards called Grand Prior, was a prince beloved by all the world, of a comely person, full of wit and address, and distinguished through all Europe for his valour. The prince of Conde, though little indebted to nature in his person, had a noble soul, and the liveliness of his wit made him amiable even in the eyes of the finest women. The duke of Nevers, distinguished by the high employments he had possessed, and by the glory he had gained in war, though in an advanced age, was yet the delight of the court: he had three sons very accomplished; the second, called the prince of Cleves, was worthy to support the honour of his house; he was brave and generous, and shewed a prudence above his years. The viscount de Chartres, descended of the illustrious family of Vendôme, whose name the princes of the blood have thought it no dishonour to wear, was equally distinguished for gallantry; he was genteel, of a fine mien, valiant, generous, and all these qualities he possessed in a very uncommon degree; in short, if any one could be compared to the duke de Nemours, it was he.

The duke de Nemours was a master-piece of nature ; the beauty of his person, inimitable as it was, was his least perfection ; what placed him above other men, was a certain agreeableness in his discourse, his actions, his looks, which was observable in none beside himself : He had in his behaviour a gaiety that was equally pleasing to men and women ; in his exercises he was very expert ; and in dress he had a peculiar manner, which was followed by all the world, but could never be imitated : in fine, such was the air of his whole person, that it was impossible to fix one's eye on any thing else, wherever he was. There was not a lady at court whose vanity would not have been gratified by his addresses ; few of those whom he addressed, could boast of having resisted him ; and even those for whom he expressed no passion, could not forbear expressing one for him : his natural gaiety and disposition to gallantry was so great, that he could not refuse some part of his cares and attention to those who made it their endeavour to please him ; and accordingly he had several mistresses, but it was hard to guess which of them was in possession of his heart. He made frequent visits to the queen-dauphin ; the beauty of this princess, the sweetness of her temper, the care she took to oblige every body, and the particular esteem she expressed for the duke de Nemours, gave ground to believe, that he had raised his views even to her. Messieurs de Guise, whose niece she was, had so far encreased their authority and reputation by this match, that their ambition prompted them to aspire at an equality with the princes of the blood, and to share in power with the constable Montmorency. The king entrusted the constable with the chief share in the administration of the government, and treated the duke of Guise and the mareschal de St. André as his favourites ; but whether favour or business admitted men to his presence, they could not preserve that privilege without the good-liking of the duchess of Valentinois ; for though she was no longer in possession either of youth or beauty, she

she yet reigned so absolutely in his heart, that his person and state seemed entirely at her disposal.

The king had such an affection for the constable, that he was no sooner possessed of the government, but he recalled him from the banishment he had been sent into by Francis the First: thus was the court divided between messieurs de Guise, and the constable, who was supported by the princes of the blood; and both parties made it their care to gain the duchess of Valentinois. The duke d'Aumale, the duke of Guise's brother, had married one of her daughters, and the constable aspired to the same alliance; he was not contented with having married his eldest son with madam Diana, the king's daughter by a Piemontese lady, who turned nun as soon as she was brought to bed. This marriage had met with a great many obstacles from the promises which monsieur Montmorency had made to madam de Piennes, one of the maids of honour to the queen; and though the king had surmounted them with extreme patience and goodness, the constable did not think himself sufficiently established, unless he secured madam de Valentinois in his interest, and separated her from messieurs de Guise, whose greatness began to give her uneasiness. The duchess had obstructed as much as she could the marriage of the dauphin with the queen of Scotland; the beauty and forward wit of that young queen, and the credit which her marriage gave to messieurs de Guise, were insupportable to her; she in particular hated the cardinal of Lorraine, who had spoke to her with severity, and even with contempt; she was sensible he took the party of the queen, so that the constable found her very well disposed to unite her interests with his, and to enter into alliance with him, by marrying her grand-daughter, madam de la Marke, with monsieur d'Anville, his second son, who succeeded him in his employment under the reign of Charles the Ninth. The constable did not expect to find the same disinclination to marriage in his second son, which he had found in his eldest; but he

proved mistaken. The duke d'Anville was desperately in love with the dauphin-queen, and how little hope soever he might have of succeeding in his passion, he could not prevail with himself to enter into an engagement that would divide his cares. The mareschal de St. André was the only person in the court, that had not lifted in either party: he was a particular favourite, and the king had a personal affection for him; he had taken a liking to him ever since he was dauphin, and created him a mareschal of France at an age in which others rarely obtain the least dignities: his favour with the king gave him a lustre which he supported by his merit and the agreeableness of his person, by a splendor in his table and furniture, and by the most profuse magnificence that ever was known in a private person, the king's liberality enabling him to bear such an expence. This prince was bounteous even to prodigality to those he favoured, and though he had not all the great qualities, he had very many; particularly he took delight, and had great skill in military affairs; he was also successful, and excepting the battle of St. Quintin, his reign had been a continued series of victory; he won in person the battle of Renti, Piemont was conquer'd, the English were driven out of France, and the emperor Charles V. found his good fortune decline before the walls of Metz, which he besieged in vain, with all the forces of the empire and of Spain: but the disgrace received at St. Quintin lessened the hopes we had of extending our conquests; and as fortune seemed to divide herself between two kings, they both found themselves insensibly disposed to peace.

At this time, the king received the news of the death of queen Mary of England; his majesty dispatched forthwith the count de Randan to queen Elizabeth, to congratulate her on her accession to the crown, and they received him with great distinction; for her affairs were so precarious at that time, that nothing could be more advantageous to her, than to see her title acknowledged by

by the king. The count found she had a thorough knowledge of the interests of the French court, and of the characters of those who composed it; but in particular, she had a great idea of the duke of Nemours: she spoke to him so often, and with so much earnestness concerning him, that the ambassador upon his return declared to the king, that there was nothing which the duke of Nemours might not expect from that princess, and that he made no question she might even be brought to marry him. The king communicated it to the duke the same evening, and caused the count de Randan to relate to him all the conversations he had had with queen Elizabeth, and in conclusion advis'd him to push his fortune: the duke of Nemours imagined at first that the king was not in earnest; but when he found to the contrary, If, by your advice, Sir, said he, I engage in this chimerical undertaking for your majesty's service, I must entreat your majesty to keep the affair secret, till the success of it shall justify me to the public; I would not be thought guilty of the intolerable vanity, to think that a queen, who has never seen me, would marry me for love. The king promised to let nobody into the design but the constable, secrecy being necessary, he knew, to the success of it. The count de Randan advised the duke to go to England under pretence of travelling; but the duke, disapproving this proposal, sent Mr. Lignerol, a sprightly young gentleman his favourite, to sound the queen's inclinations, and to endeavour to make some steps towards advancing that affair: In the mean time, he paid a visit to the duke of Savoy, who was then at Brussels with the king of Spain.

There appeared at this time a lady at court, who drew the eyes of the whole world; and one may imagine she was a perfect beauty, to gain admiration in a place where there were so many fine women; she was of the same family with the viscount of Chartres, and one of the greatest heiresses of France; her father died young; and left her to the guardianship of madam de Chartres, his

wife, whose wealth, virtue, and merit were uncommon. After the loss of her husband she retired from court, and lived many years in the country; during this retreat, her chief care was bestowed on the education of her daughter; but she did not make it her business to cultivate her wit and beauty only, she took care also to inculcate virtue into her tender mind, and to make it amiable to her. The generality of mothers imagine, that it is sufficient to forbear talking of gallantries before young people, to prevent their engaging in them; but madam de Chartres was of a different opinion: she often entertained her daughter with descriptions of love; she shewed her what there was agreeable in it, that she might the more easily persuade her wherein it was dangerous; she related to her the insincerity, the faithlessness, and want of candour in men, and the domestic misfortunes that flow from engagements with them; on the other hand, she made her sensible, what tranquillity attends the life of a virtuous woman, and what lustre modesty gives to a person who possesses birth and beauty; at the same time she informed her, how difficult it was to preserve this virtue, except by an extreme distrust of one's self, and by a constant attachment to the only thing which constitutes a woman's happiness, to love and to be loved by her husband.

This heiress was, at that time, one of the greatest matches in France; and though she was very young, several marriages had been proposed to her mother; but madam de Chartres being ambitious, hardly thought any thing worthy of her daughter; and when she was sixteen years of age she brought her to court. The viscount of Chartres, who went to meet her, was with reason surpris'd at the beauty of the young lady; her fine hair and lovely complexion gave her a lustre that was peculiar to herself; all her features were regular, and her whole person was full of grace.

The day after her arrival, she went to chuse some jewels at a famous Italian's; this man came from Flo-

rence

rence with the queen, and had acquired such immense riches by his trade, that his house seemed rather fit for a prince than a merchant; while she was there, the prince of Cleves came in, and was so touched with her beauty, that he could not dissemble his surprize, nor could Mademoiselle de Chartres forbear blushing upon observing the astonishment he was in; nevertheless she recollected herself, without taking any further notice of him, than she was obliged to do in civility to a person of his seeming rank. The prince of Cleves viewed her with admiration, and could not comprehend who that fine lady was, whom he did not know. He found by her air, and her retinue, that she was of the first quality; by her youth he should have taken her to be a maid; but not seeing her mother, and hearing the Italian call her Madam, he did not know what to think; and all the while he kept his eyes fixed upon her, he found that his behaviour embarrassed her, unlike to most young ladies, who always behold with pleasure the effect of their beauty; he found too, that he had made her impatient to be gone; and in truth she went away immediately. The prince of Cleves was not uneasy at himself on having lost the view of her, in hopes of being informed who she was; but when he found she was not known, he was under the utmost surprize; her beauty, and the modest air he had observed in her actions, affected him so, that from that moment he entertained a passion for her. In the evening he waited on his majesty's sister.

The prince of Cleves went there according to his custom; he was so touched with the wit and beauty of Mademoiselle de Chartres, that he could talk of nothing else; he related his adventure aloud, and was never tired with the praises of this lady, whom he had seen, but did not know. Madame told him, that there was nobody like her he described, and that if there were, she would be known by the whole world. Madam de Dampiere, one of the princess's ladies of honour, and a friend of

madam de Chartres, overhearing the conversation, came up to her highness, and whispered her in the ear, that it was certainly Mademoiselle de Chartres whom the prince had seen. Madame, returning to her discourse with the prince, told him, if he would give her his company again the next morning, he should see the beauty he was so much touched with. Accordingly Mademoiselle de Chartres came the next day to court, and was received by both queens in the most obliging manner that can be imagined, and with such admiration by every body else, that nothing was to be heard at court but her praises; which she received with so agreeable a modesty, that she seemed not to have heard them, or at least not to be moved with them. She afterwards went to wait upon Madame; that princess, after having commended her beauty, informed her of the surprize she had given the prince of Cleves; the prince came in immediately after: Come hither, said she to him, see, if I have not kept my word with you; and if, at the same time that I shew you Mademoiselle de Chartres, I do not shew you the lady you are in search of. You ought to thank me, at least, for having acquainted her how much you are her admirer.

The prince of Cleves was overjoyed to find, that the lady he admitted was of quality equal to her beauty; he addressed her, and entreated her to remember that he was her first lover, and had conceived the highest honour and respect for her, before he knew her.

The chevalier de Guise, and the prince, who were two bosom friends, took their leave of Madame together. They were no sooner gone; but they began to launch out into the praises of Mademoiselle de Chartres without bounds; they were sensible at length that they had run into excess in her commendation, and so both gave over for that time; but they were obliged the next day to renew the subject, for this new-risen beauty long continued to supply discourse to the whole court; the queen herself was lavish in her praise, and shewed her particular

lar marks of favour; the queen-dauphin made her one of her favourites, and begged her mother to bring her often to her court; the princesses, the king's daughters, made her a party in all their diversions; in short, she had the love and admiration of the whole court, except that of the duchess of Valentinois: not that this young beauty gave her umbrage; long experience convinced her she had nothing to fear on the part of the king, but she had so great a hatred for the viscount of Chartres, whom she had endeavoured to bring into her interest by marrying him with one of her daughters, and who had joined himself to the queen's party, that she could not have the least favourable thought of a person who bore his name, and was a great object of his friendship.

The prince of Cleves became passionately in love with Mademoiselle de Chartres, and ardently wished to marry her; but he was afraid the haughtiness of her mother would not stoop to match her with one who was not the head of his family: nevertheless, his birth was illustrious, and his elder brother, the count d'En, had just married a lady so nearly related to the royal family, that this apprehension was rather the effect of his love, than grounded on any substantial reason. He had a great number of rivals; the most formidable among them, for his birth, his merit, and the lustre which royal favour cast upon his house, was the chevalier de Guise; this gentleman fell in love with Mademoiselle de Chartres the first day he saw her, and he discovered the prince of Cleves's passion, as the prince of Cleves discovered his. Though they were intimate friends, their having the same pretensions gradually created a coolness between them, and their friendship grew into an indifference, without their being able to come to an explanation on the matter. The prince of Cleves's good fortune in having seen Mademoiselle de Chartres first seemed to be a happy presage, and gave him some advantage over his rivals; but he foresaw great obstructions on the part of the duke of Nevers, his father: the duke was strictly at-

tached to the duchess of Valentinois, and the viscount de Chartres was her enemy, which was a sufficient reason to hinder the duke from consenting to the marriage of his son with a niece of the viscount's.

Madam de Chartres, who had taken so much care to inspire virtue into her daughter, did not fail to continue the same care in a place where it was so necessary, and where there were so many dangerous examples. Ambition and gallantry were the soul of the court, and employed both sexes equally; there were so many different interests and so many cabals, and the ladies had so great a share in them, that love was always mixed with business, and business with love.

The chevalier de Guise was so open and unguarded, with respect to his passion for Mademoiselle de Chartres, that nobody was ignorant of it; nevertheless he saw nothing but impossibilities in what he desired: he was sensible that he was not a proper match for her, by reason of the narrowness of his fortune, which was not sufficient to support his dignity; and he was sensible besides, that his brothers would not approve of his marrying, the marriages of younger brothers being looked upon as what tends to the lessening great families.

The prince of Cleves had not given less public proofs of his love, than the chevalier de Guise had done, which made the duke of Nevers very uneasy; however, he thought that he needed only to speak to his son to make him change his conduct; but he was very much surprised to find in him a settled design of marrying Mademoiselle de Chartres, and flew out into such excesses of passion on that subject, that the occasion of it was soon known to the whole court, and among others to madam de Chartres: she never imagined that the duke of Nevers would not think her daughter a very advantageous match for his son, nor was she a little astonished to find, that the houses both of Cleves and Guise avoided her alliance, instead of courting it. Her resentment on this account put her upon finding out a
match

match for her daughter, which would raise her above those that imagined themselves above her: after having looked about, she fixed upon the prince dauphin, son of the duke de Montpensier, one of the most considerable persons then at court. As madam de Chartres abounded in wit, and was assisted by the viscount, who was in great consideration, and as her daughter herself was a very considerable match, she managed the matter with so much dexterity and success, that Monsieur de Montpensier appeared to desire the marriage, and there was no appearance of any difficulties in it.

But the duchess of Valentinois being warned of the design in view, had traversed it with so much care, and prepossessed the king so much against it, that when Monsieur d'Anville came to speak to his majesty about it, he plainly shewed he did not approve of it, and commanded him to signify as much to the prince de Montpensier. One may easily judge what the sentiments of madam de Chartres were, upon the breaking off of an affair which she had set her mind so much upon, and the ill success of which gave such an advantage to her enemies, and was so great a prejudice to her daughter.

No one now entertained any further thoughts of Mademoiselle de Chartres, either fearing to incur the king's displeasure, or despairing to succeed with a lady, who aspired to an alliance with a prince of the blood. The prince of Cleves alone was not disheartened at either of these considerations; the death of the duke of Nevers his father, which happened at that time, set him at entire liberty to follow his inclination; and no sooner was the time of mourning expired, but he wholly applied himself to the gaining of Mademoiselle de Chartres. It was lucky for him that he addressed her at a time when what had happened had discouraged the approaches of others. What allayed his joy, was his fear of not being the most agreeable to her; and he would

would have preferred the happiness of pleasing, to the certainty of marrying her without being beloved.

The chevalier de Guise had given him some jealousy ; but as it was rather grounded on the merit of that prince, than on any action of Mademoiselle de Chartres, he made it his whole endeavour to discover, if he was so happy as to have his addressees admitted and approved : he had no opportunity of seeing her but at court or public assemblies, so that it was very difficult for him to get a private conversation with her ; at last he found means to do it, and informed her of his intention and of his love, with all the respect imaginable.

As Mademoiselle de Chartres had a noble and generous heart, she was sincerely touched with gratitude for the prince of Cleves's behaviour ; this gratitude gave a certain sweetness to her words and answers, sufficient to furnish hopes to a man so desperately enamoured as the prince was ; so that he flattered himself, in some measure, that he should succeed in what he so much wished for.

She gave her mother an account of this conversation ; and madam de Chartres told her, that the prince of Cleves had so many good qualities, and discovered a discretion so much above his years, that if her inclination led her to marry him, she would consent to it with pleasure. Mademoiselle de Chartres made answer, that she observed in him the same good qualities ; that she should have less reluctance in marrying him than any other man, but that she had no particular affection to his person.

The next day the prince caused his thoughts to be communicated to madam de Chartres, who gave her consent to what was proposed to her ; nor had she the least distrust but that, in the prince of Cleves, she provided her daughter a husband capable of securing her affections. The articles were concluded ; the king was acquainted with it, and the marriage made public.

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The prince of Cleves found himself happy, but yet not entirely contented : he saw with a great deal of regret, that the sentiments of Mademoiselle de Chartres did not exceed those of esteem and respect ; and he could not flatter himself that she concealed more obliging thoughts of him, since the situation they were in permitted her to discover them without the least violence done to modesty. It was not long before he expostulated with her on this subject : Is it possible, says he, that I should not be happy in marrying you ? and yet it is certain, I am not. You only shew me a sort of civility which is far from giving me satisfaction ; you express none of those pretty inquietudes, the concern, and impatience, which are the soul of love ; you are no further affected with my passion, than you would be with one which flowed only from the advantage of your fortune, and not from the beauty of your person,---It is unjust in you to complain, replied the princess, I do not know what you can desire of me more ; I think decency will not allow me to go further than I do.---It is true, replied he, you shew some appearances I should be satisfied with, were there any thing beyond ; but instead of being restrained by decency, it is that only which makes you act as you do ; I am not in your heart and inclinations, and my presence neither gives you pain nor pleasure.---You cannot doubt, replied she, but it is a sensible pleasure to me to see you ; and when I do see you, I blush so often, that you cannot doubt, but the seeing you gives me pain also.---Your blushes, madam, replied he, cannot deceive me ; they are signs of modesty, but do not prove the heart to be affected, and I shall conclude nothing more from hence than what I ought.

Mademoiselle de Chartres did not know what to answer ; these distinctions were above her comprehension. The prince of Cleves plainly saw she was far from having that tenderness of affection for him, which was requisite

to his happiness; it was manifest she could not feel a passion which she did not understand.

The chevalier de Guise returned from a journey a few days before the marriage. He was extremely afflicted to see her become the wife of another: his grief, however, did not extinguish his passion; and his love was as great as ever. Mademoiselle de Chartres was not ignorant of it; and he made her sensible at his return, that she was the cause of that deep melancholy which appeared in his countenance. He had so much merit; and so much agreeableness, that it was almost impossible to make him unhappy without pitying him, nor could she forbear pitying him; but her pity did not lead to love. She acquainted her mother with the uneasiness which the chevalier's passion gave her.

Madam de Chartres admired the honour of her daughter, and she admired it with reason, for never was any one more naturally sincere; but she was surprised, at the same time, at the insensibility of her heart, and the more so, when she found that the prince of Cleves had not been able to affect her any more than others: for this reason, she took great pains to endear her husband to her, and to make her sensible how much she owed to the affection he had for her, and to the tenderness he expressed for her, by preferring her to all other matches, at a time when no one else durst entertain the least thoughts of her.

The marriage was solemnized at the Louvre; and in the evening the king and the two queens, with the whole court, supped at madam de Chartres's house, where they were entertained with the utmost magnificence. The chevalier de Guise durst not distinguish himself by being absent from the ceremony; but he was so little master of himself, that it was easy to observe his concern.

The prince of Cleves did not find that Mademoiselle de Chartres had changed her mind by changing her name; his quality of a husband entitled him to the largest

largest privileges, but gave him no greater share in the affections of his wife: hence it was, that though he was her husband, he did not cease to be her lover, because he had always something to wish beyond what he possessed; and though she lived perfectly easy with him, yet he was not perfectly happy. He preserved for her a passion full of violence and inquietude, but without jealousy, which had no share in his griefs. Never was husband less inclined to it, and never was wife farther from giving the least occasion for it. She was nevertheless constantly in view of the court; she frequented the courts of the two queens, and of Madame: all the people of galantry saw her both there and at her brother-in-law the duke of Nevers's, whose house was open to the whole world; but she had an air which inspired so great respect, and had in it something so distant from galantry, that the mareschal de St. Andre, a bold man, and supported by the king's favour, became her lover, without daring to let her know it any otherwise than by his cares and assiduities. A great many others were in the same condition: and madam de Chartres had added to her daughter's discretion so exact a conduct with regard to decorum, that every body was satisfied she was not to be come at.

A marriage was now agreed upon, between the duke of Lorraine and Madam Claude of France, the king's second daughter; and the month of February was appointed for the nuptials.

In the mean time the duke of Nemours continued at Brussels, his thoughts being wholly employed on his design in England; he was continually sending or receiving couriers from thence; his hopes increased every day, and at last Lignerol sent him word, that it was time to finish by his presence what was so well begun. He received this news with all the joy a young, ambitious man is capable of, who sees himself advanced to a throne merely by the force of his personal merit; his mind insensibly accustomed itself to the grandeur of a royal

royal state; and whereas he had at first rejected this undertaking as an impracticable thing, the difficulties of it were now worn out of his imagination, and he no longer saw any thing to obstruct his way.

He sent away in haste to Paris to give the necessary orders for providing a magnificent equipage, that he might make his appearance in England with a splendor suitable to the design he was to conduct; and soon after he followed himself, to assist at the marriage of the duke of Lorraine.

He arrived the evening before the espousals, and that very evening waited on the king to give him an account of his affair, and to receive his orders and advice how to govern himself in it. Afterwards he waited on the queens; but the princess of Cleves was not there; so that she did not see him, nor so much as know of his arrival. She had heard every body speak of this celebrated prince, as of the handsomest and most agreeable man at court; and the queen-dauphin had described him in such a manner, and spoke of him to her so often, that she had raised in her a curiosity and even impatience to see him.

The princess of Cleves employed the day of wedding in dressing herself, that she might appear with the greater advantage at the ball and royal banquet that were to be at the Louvre. When she came, every one admired both her beauty and her dress. The ball began, and while she was dancing with the duke of Guise, a noise was heard at the door of the hall, as if way was making for some person of uncommon distinction. She had finished her dance, and as she was casting her eyes round to single out some other person, the king desired her to take him who came in last; she turned about, and viewing him as he was passing over the seats to come to the place where they danced, she immediately concluded he was the duke of Nemours. The duke's person was turned in so delicate a manner, that it was impossible not to express surprize at the first sight of
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of him, particularly that evening, when the care he had taken to adorn himself added much to the fine air of his carriage. It was as impossible to behold the princess of Cleves without equal admiration.

The duke de Nemours was struck with such surprize at her beauty, that when they approached and paid their respects to each other, he could not forbear shewing some tokens of his admiration. When they begun to dance, a soft murmur of praise ran through the whole company. The king and the two queens remembering, that the duke and princess had never seen one another before, found something very particular in seeing them dance together without knowing each other; they called them, as soon as they had ended their dance, without giving them time to speak to any body; asked them if they had not a desire to know each other, and if they were not at some loss about it.---As for me, madam, said the duke to the queen, I am under no uncertainty in this matter; but as the princess of Cleves has not the same reasons to lead her to guess who I am, as I have to direct me to know her, I should be glad if your majesty would be pleased to let her know my name.---I believe, said the queen-dauphin, that she knows your name as well as you know her's, ---I assure you, madam, replied the princess a little embarrassed, that I am not so good a guesser as you imagine.---Yes, you guess very well, answered the queen-dauphin; and your unwillingness to acknowledge that you know the duke of Nemours, without having seen him before, carries in it something very obliging to him. The queen interrupted them, that the ball might go on; and the duke de Nemours took out the queen-dauphin. This princess was a perfect beauty, and such she appeared in the eyes of the duke de Nemours before he went to Flanders; but all this evening he could admire nothing but madam de Cleves.

The chevalier de Guise, whose idol she still was, sat at her feet, and what had passed filled him with the utmost

utmost grief; he looked upon it as ominous for him, that Fortune had destined the duke of Nemours to be in love with the princess of Cleves. And whether there appeared in reality any concern in the princess's face, or whether the chevalier's jealousy only led him to suspect it, he believed that she was touched with the sight of the duke; and could not forbear telling her, that monsieur de Nemours was very happy to commence an acquaintance with her, by an incident which had something very galant and extraordinary in it.

Madam de Cleves returned home with her thoughts full of what had passed at the ball; and though it was very late, she went into her mother's room to give her a relation of it; in doing which she praised the duke of Nemours with a certain air, that gave madam de Chartres the same suspicion the chevalier de Guise had entertained before.

The day following, the ceremony of the duke of Loraine's marriage was performed; and there the princess of Cleves observed so inimitable a grace, and so fine a mien in the duke of Nemours, that she was yet more surpris'd.

She afterwards saw him at the court of the queen-dauphin; she saw him play at tennis with the king; she saw him run the ring; she heard him discourse; still she found he far excelled every body else, and drew the attention of the company to him where-ever he was; in short, the gracefulness of his person, and the agreeableness of his wit soon made a considerable impression on her heart.

The duke de Nemours had an inclination no less violent for her; and hence flow'd all that gaiety and sweetness of behaviour, which the first desires of pleasing ordinarily inspire a man with: hence he became more amiable than ever he was before; so that by often seeing one another, and by seeing in each other whatever was most accomplished at court, it could not be, but

but that they must mutually receive the greatest pleasure from such a commerce.

The duchess of Valentinois made one in all parties of pleasure; and the king was still as passionately fond of her as in the beginning of his love. The princess of Cleves being at those years, wherein people think a woman is incapable of inciting love after the age of twenty-five, beheld with the utmost astonishment the king's passion for the duchess, who was a grandmother, and had lately married her granddaughter: she often spoke on this subject to madam de Chartres. Is it possible, madam, said she, that the king should still continue to love? How could he take a fancy to one, who was so much older than himself, who had been his father's mistress, and who, as I have heard, is still such to many others?---'Tis certain, answered madam de Chartres, it was neither the merit nor the fidelity of the duchess of Valentinois which gave birth to the king's passion, or preserved it; and this is what he cannot be justified in; for if this lady had had beauty and youth suitable to her birth, and the merit of having had no other lover; if she had been exactly true and faithful to the king; if she had loved him with respect only to his person, without the interested views of greatness and fortune, and without using her power but for honourable purposes and for his majesty's interest; in this case, it must be confessed, one could have hardly forbore praising his passion for her. If I was not afraid, continued madam de Chartres, that you would say of me what is said of most women of my years, that they love to recount the history of their own times, I would inform you how the king's passion for this lady began, and of several particulars of the court of the late king, which have a great relation to things that are acted at present.---Far from blaming you, replied the princess of Cleves, for repeating the histories of past times, I lament, madam, that you have not instructed me in those of the present, nor informed me

as to the different interests and parties of the court. I am so entirely ignorant of them, that I thought a few days ago, the constable was very well with the queen. ---You was extremely mistaken, answered madam de Chartres; the queen hates the constable, and if ever she has power, he will be but too sensible of it; she knows he has often told the king, that of all his children none resembled him but his natural ones.---I should never have suspected this hatred, said the princess of Cleves, after having seen her assiduity in writing to the constable during his imprisonment, the joy she expressed at his return, and how she always calls him Compere, as well as the king.---If you judge from appearances in a court, replied madam de Chartres, you will often be deceived; truth and appearances seldom go together.

But to return to the duchess of Valentinois; you know her name is Diana de Poitiers, her family is very illustrious, she is descended from the ancient dukes of Aquitaine, her grandmother was a natural daughter of Lewis the XIth, and in short she possesses every thing that is great in respect to birth. St. Valier, her father, had the unhappiness to be involved in the affair of the constable of Bourbon, which you have heard of; he was condemned to lose his head, and accordingly was conducted to the scaffold: his daughter, who was extremely beautiful, and who had already charmed the late king, managed so well, I do not know by what means, that she obtained her father's life. The pardon was brought him at the moment he was expecting the fatal blow; but the pardon availed little, for fear had seized him so deeply, that it bereft him of his senses, and he died a few days after. His daughter appeared at court as the king's mistress; but the Italian expedition, and the imprisonment of the present prince, were interruptions to his love-affair. When the late king returned from Spain, and Madame the regent went to meet him at Bayonne, she brought all her maids of honour with her,

her, among whom was Mademoiselle de Piffelen, who was since duchess d'Etampes; the king fell in love with her, though she was inferior in birth, wit and beauty to the duchess of Valentinois, and had no advantage above her but that of being very young. I have heard her say several times, that she was born the same day Diana de Poitiers was married; but she spoke this in the malice of her heart, and not as what she knew to be true; for I am much mistaken, if the duchess of Valentinois did not marry monsieur de Breze, at the same time that the king fell in love with madam d'Etampes. Never was a greater hatred than that between these two ladies; the duchess could not pardon madam d'Etampes for having taken from her the title of the king's mistress; and madam d'Etampes was violently jealous of the duchess, because the king still kept a correspondence with her. That prince was by no means constant to his mistresses; there was always one among them that had the title and honours of mistress, but the ladies of the small band, as they were stiled, shared his favour by turns. The loss of the dauphin, his son, who died at Tournon, and was thought to be poisoned, extremely afflicted him; he had not the same affection and tenderness for his second son, the present king; he imagined he did not see in him spirit and vivacity enough, and complained of it one day to the duchess of Valentinois, who told him, she would endeavour to raise a passion in him for her, in order to make him more sprightly and agreeable. She succeeded in it, as you see, and this passion is now of above twenty years duration, without being changed either by time or incidents.

The late king at first opposed it; and whether he had still love enough left for the duchess of Valentinois to be jealous, or whether he was urged on by the duchess d'Etampes, who was in despair upon seeing the dauphin so much attached to her enemy; 'tis certain he beheld this passion with an indignation and resentment, that shewed itself every day by something or other. The dauphin neither valued his anger or his hatred,

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nor could any thing oblige him either to abate or conceal his flame ; so that the king was forced to accustom himself to bear it with patience. This opposition of his to his father's will, withdrew his affections from him more and more, and transferred them to his third son, the duke of Orleans, who was a prince of a fine person, full of fire and ambition, and of a youthful heat which wanted to be moderated ; however, he would have made a very great prince, had he arrived to a more ripened age.

The rank of eldest, which the dauphin held, and the king's favour which the duke of Orleans was possessed of, created between them a sort of emulation, that grew by degrees to hatred. This emulation began from their infancy, and was still kept up in its height.

The discord between the two brothers put madam d'Etampes upon the thought of strengthening herself with the duke of Orleans, in order to support her power with the king against the duchess of Valentinois ; accordingly she succeeded in it ; and that young prince, though he felt no emotions of love for her, entered no less into her interest, than the dauphin into that of madam de Valentinois. Hence rose two factions at court, of such a nature as you may imagine ; but the intrigues of them were not confined to the quarrels of women.

Some time after, the duke of Orleans died at Farmontiers of a kind of contagious distemper : he was in love with one of the finest women of the court, and was beloved by her. I will not mention her name, because she has since lived with so much discretion, and has so carefully concealed the passion she had for that prince, that one ought to be tender of her reputation. It happened she received the news of her husband's death, at the same time as she heard of the duke's, so that she had that pretext to enable her to conceal her real sorrow, without being at the trouble of putting any constraint upon herself.

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The king did not long survive the prince his son ; he died two years after ; he recommended to the dauphin to make use of the cardinal de Tournon and the admiral de Annebault, but said nothing at all of the constable, who was then in banishment at Chantilli. Nevertheless, the first thing the king his son did was to recal him, and make him his prime minister.

Madam d'Etampes was discarded, and received all the ill-treatment she could possibly expect from an enemy so very powerful ; the duchess of Valentinois amply revenged herself both of that lady, and all those who had disobliged her ; she seemed to reign more absolute in the king's heart, than she did even when he was dauphin. During the twelve years reign of this prince she has been absolute in every thing ; she disposes of all governments and offices of trust and power ; she has disgraced the cardinal de Tournon, the chancellor, and Villeroy ; those who have endeavoured to open the king's mind with respect to her conduct, have been undone in the attempt ; the count de Taix, great master of the ordnance, who had no kindness for her, could not forbear speaking of her galantries, and particularly of that with the count de Brissac, of whom the king was already very jealous. Nevertheless she contrived things so well, that the count de Taix was disgraced, and his employment taken from him ; and what is almost incredible, she procured it to be given to the count de Brissac, and afterwards made him a marshal of France. Notwithstanding, the king's jealousy encreased to such a height, that he could no longer suffer him to continue at court : this passion of jealousy, which is fierce and violent in other men, is gentle and moderate in him through the great respect he has for his mistress, and therefore he did not go about to remove his rival, but under the pretext of giving him the government of Piemont. He has lived there several years ; last winter he returned to Paris, under pretence of demanding troops and other necessaries for the army he commands ; the desire of seeing the duchess of Valen-

tinous again, and the fear of being forgotten by her, was perhaps the principal motive of this journey. The king received him very coldly ; *messieurs de Guise*, who have no kindness for him, but dare not shew it on account of the duchess, made use of *monsieur the viscount*, her declared enemy, to prevent his obtaining what he came to demand. It was no difficult matter to do him hurt. The king hated him, and was uneasy at his presence ; so that he was obliged to return to *Piemont* without any benefit from his journey, except, perhaps, that of rekindling in the heart of the duchess the flame which absence began to extinguish. The king has had a great many other subjects of jealousy, but either he has not been informed of them, or has not dared to complain of them.

I do not know, daughter, added *madam de Chartres*, if I have not already told you more of these things than you desired to know.---I am far, *madam*, from complaining of that, replied the princess of Cleves, and if it was not for fear of being importunate, I should yet desire to be informed of several circumstances I am ignorant of.

The duke de Nemours's passion for *madam de Cleves* was at first so violent, that he had no relish left for any of the ladies he paid his addresses to before, and with whom he kept a correspondence during his absence ; he even lost all remembrance of his engagements with them, and not only made it his business to find excuses to break with them, but had not the patience to hear their complaints, or make any answer to the reproaches they laid upon him. The queen-dauphin herself, for whom his regards had been very tender, could no longer preserve a place in that heart which was now devoted to the princess of Cleves. His impatience of making a tour to England began to abate, and he shewed no earnestness in hastening his equipage. He frequently went to the queen-dauphin's court, because the princess of Cleves was often there, and he was very easy in leaving people in the opinion they had of his passion

PART I. THE PRINCESS OF CLEVES.

passion for that queen; he put so great a value on madam de Cleves, that he resolved to be rather wanting in giving proofs of his love, than to hazard its being publicly known; he did not so much as speak of it to the viscount de Chartres, who was his intimate friend, and from whom he concealed nothing; the truth is, he conducted this affair with so much discretion, that nobody suspected he was in love with madam de Cleves, except the chevalier de Guise; and she would scarcely have perceived it herself, if the inclination she had for him had not led her into a particular attention to all his actions, by which she was convinced of it.

She no longer continued to have the same disposition, to communicate to her mother what she thought concerning the duke de Nemours, as she had to talk to her about her other lovers; though she had no settled design of concealing it from her, yet she did not speak of it. Madam de Chartres, however, plainly perceived the duke's attachment to her daughter, as well as her daughter's inclination for him: the knowledge of this could not but sensibly afflict her, nor could she be ignorant of the danger this young lady was in, in being beloved by, and loving so accomplished a person as the duke de Nemours: she was entirely confirmed in the suspicion she had of this business, by an incident which fell out a few days after.

The marshal de St. André, who took all opportunities to shew his magnificence, desired the king, under pretence of shewing him his house which was just finished, to do him the honour to sup there with the two queens. The marshal was also very glad to display, in the sight of the princess of Cleves, that splendid and expensive manner of life, which he carried to so great a profusion.

Some days before that appointed for the entertainment, the dauphin, who had an ill state of health, found himself indisposed, and saw nobody; the queen-dauphin had spent all that day with him; and in the

evening, upon his growing better, all the persons of quality that were in the anti-chamber were admitted ; the queen-dauphin returned to her own apartment, where she found madam de Cleves and some other ladies, with whom she lived in familiarity.

It being already very late, and not being dressed, she did not wait upon the queen, but gave out that she was not to be seen, and ordered her jewels to be brought, in order to chuse out some for the mareschal de St. André's ball, and present the princess of Cleves with some, as she had promised her. While they were thus employed, the prince of Conde entered ; his great quality gave him free access every where. Doubtless, said the queen-dauphin, you come from my husband's apartment : What are they doing there ?---Madam, said he, they are maintaining a dispute against the duke of Nemours, and he defends the argument he undertook with so much warmth, that he must needs be very much interested in it ; I believe he has some mistress that gives him uneasiness by going to balls, as he declares that it is a vexatious thing to a lover to see the person he loves in those places.

How, replied the queen-dauphin, would not the duke de Nemours have his mistress go to a ball ? I thought that husbands might wish their wives would not go there ; but as for lovers, I never imagined they were of that opinion.---The duke de Nemours finds, answered the prince of Conde, that nothing is so insupportable to lovers as balls, whether they are beloved again, or whether they are or not. He says, if they are beloved, they have the chagrin to be loved the less on this account for several days ; that there is no woman, whom her anxiety for dress does not divert from thinking on her lover ; that they are entirely taken up with that one circumstance ; that this care to adorn themselves is for the whole world, as well as for the man they favour ; that when they are at a ball, they are desirous to please all who look at them ; and that when they triumph in their beauty, they experience a

joy to which their lovers very little contribute. He argues further, that if one is not beloved, 'tis a yet greater torment to see one's mistress at an assembly; that the more she is admired by the public, the more unhappy one is not to be beloved; and that the lover is in continual fear lest her beauty should raise a more successful passion than his own; lastly, he finds, there is no torment equal to that of seeing one's mistress at a ball, unless it be to know that she is there, and not to be there one's self.

Madam de Cleves pretended not to hear what the prince of Conde said, though she listened very attentively; she easily saw what part she had in the duke of Nemours's opinion, and particularly as to what he said of the uneasiness of not being at a ball where his mistress was, because he was not to be at that of the mareschal de St. Andre, the king having sent him to meet the duke of Ferrara.

The queen-dauphin and the prince of Conde not going into the duke's opinion, were very merry upon the subject. There is but one occasion, madam, said the prince to her, in which the duke will consent his mistress should go to a ball, and that is when he himself gives it. He says, that when he gave your majesty one last year, his mistress was so kind as to come to it, though seemingly only to attend you; that it is always a favour done to a lover, to partake of an entertainment which he gives; that it is an agreeable circumstance for him to have his mistress see him preside in a place where the whole court is, and see him acquit himself well in doing the honours of it.---The duke de Nemours was in the right, said the queen-dauphin smiling, to approve of his mistress's being at his own ball; there was then so great a number of ladies, whom he honoured with the distinction of that name, that if they had not come, the assembly would have been very thin.

The prince of Conde had no sooner begun to relate the duke de Nemour's sentiments concerning assemblies, but madam de Cleves felt in herself a strong aversion

to go to that of the mareschal de St. André: she easily came into the opinion, that a woman ought not to be an entertainment given by one that professed love to her; and she was very glad to find out a reason of reservedness, for doing a thing which would oblige the duke of Nemours. However, she carried away with her the ornaments which the queen-dauphin had given her; but when she shewed them her mother, she told her that she did not design to make use of them; that the mareschal de St. André took a great deal of pains to shew his attachment to her, and she did not doubt he would be glad to have it believed that a compliment was designed her in the entertainment he gave the king; and that under the pretence of doing the honours of his house, he would shew her civilities which would be uneasy to her.

Madam de Chartres for some time opposed her daughter's opinion, as thinking it very singular; but when she saw she was obstinate in it, she gave way, and told her, that in that case she ought to pretend an indisposition as an excuse for not going to the ball, because the real reasons which hindred her would not be approved of; and care ought to be taken that they should not be suspected. Madam de Cleves voluntarily consented to pass some days at her mother's, in order not to go to any place where the duke of Nemours was not to be. However, the duke set out, without the pleasure of knowing she would not be at the ball.

The day after the ball he returned, and was informed that she was not there; but as he did not know the conversation he had at the dauphin's court had been repeated to her, he was far from thinking himself happy enough to have been the reason of her not going.

The day after, while he was at the queen's apartments, and talking to the queen-dauphin, madam de Chartres and madam de Cleves came in. Madam de Cleves was dressed a little negligently, as a person who had been indisposed, but her countenance did not at all correspond with her dress.---You look so pretty, says the

the queen-dauphin to her, that I can't believe you have been ill ; I think the prince of Conde, when he told us the duke de Nemours's opinion of the ball, persuaded you, that to go there would be doing a favour to the mareschal de St. André, and that is the reason which hindered you from going, Madam de Cleves blushed, both because the queen-dauphin had conjectured right, and because she spoke her conjecture in the presence of the duke de Nemours.

Madam de Chartres immediately perceived the true reason why her daughter refused to go to the ball ; and to prevent the duke de Nemours's discovering it, as well as herself, she took up the discourse after a manner that gave what she said an air of truth.---I assure you, madam, said she to the queen-dauphin, that your majesty has done my daughter more honour than she deserves ; she was really indisposed, but I believe, if I had not hindered her, she would not have failed to wait on you, and to shew herself under any disadvantages, for the pleasure of seeing what there was extraordinary at yesterday's entertainment. The queen-dauphin gave credit to what madam de Chartres said ; but the duke de Nemours was sorry to find so much probability in it : nevertheless, the blushes of the princess of Cleves made him suspect, that what the queen-dauphin had said was not altogether false. The princess of Cleves at first was concerned the duke had any room to believe it was he who had hindered her from going to the mareschal de St. André ; but afterwards, she was a little chagrined that her mother had entirely taken off the suspicion of it.

Madam de Chartres was not willing to let her daughter see that she knew her sentiments for the duke, for fear of making herself suspected in some things which she was very desirous to tell her. One day she set herself to talk about him, and a great deal of good she said of him ; but mixed with it abundance of sham praises, as the prudence he shewed in never falling in love, and how wise he was to make the affair of women and love an amusement, instead of a serious business.

business. It is not, added she, that he is not suspected to have a very uncommon passion for the queen-dauphin; I observe he visits her very often; and I advise you to avoid, as much as possible, speaking to him, and especially in private; because, since the queen-dauphin treats you as she does, it would be said, that you are their confidante; and you know how disagreeable that sort of reputation is: I am of opinion, if this report continues, that you should not visit the queen-dauphin so often, in order to avoid involving yourself in adventures of gallantry.

The princess of Cleves had never heard before of the amour between the duke de Nemours and the queen-dauphin; she was so much surprised at what her mother had told her, and seemed to see so plainly how she had been mistaken in her thoughts about the duke, that she changed countenance. Madam de Chartres perceived it. Visitors came in that moment; and the princess of Cleves retired to her own apartment, and shut herself up in her closet.

One can't express the grief she felt, to discover, by what her mother had been just saying, the interest her heart had in the duke de Nemours; she had not dared as yet to acknowledge it to her secret thoughts; she then found, that the sentiments she had for him were such as the prince of Cleves had required of her; she perceived how shameful it was to entertain them for another, and not for a husband that deserved them; she found herself under the utmost embarrassment, and was dreadfully afraid lest the duke should make use of her only as a means to come at the queen-dauphin; and it was this thought determined her to impart to her mother something she had not yet told her.

The next morning she went into her mother's chamber to put her resolves in execution, but she found madam de Chartres had some touches of a fever, and therefore did not think proper to speak to her: this indisposition, however, appeared so insignificant, that madam de Cleves

Cleves made no scruple after dinner to visit the queen-dauphin; she was in her closet with two or three ladies of her most familiar acquaintance. We were speaking, said she to her, as soon as she saw her, of the duke de Nemours, and were admiring how much he is changed since his return from Brussels; before he went there, he had an infinite number of mistresses; and it was his own fault, for he shewed an equal regard to those who had merit, and to those who had none; since his return, he neither knows the one nor the other; there never was so great a change; I find his humour is changed too, and that he is less gay than he used to be.

The princess of Cleves made no answer; and it shocked her to think she should have taken all that they said of the change in the duke for proofs of his passion for her, had she not been undeceived; she felt in herself some little resentment against the queen-dauphin, for endeavouring to find out reasons, and seeming surprised at a thing, which she probably knew more of than any one else: she could not forbear shewing something of it; and when the other ladies withdrew, she came up and told her in a low voice---And is it I, madam, you have been pointing at? and have you a mind to conceal, that you are she who has made such an alteration in the conduct of the duke of Nemours? --You do me injustice, answered the queen-dauphin; you know I conceal nothing from you; it is true, the duke of Nemours, before he went to Brussels, had, I believe, an intention to let me know he did not hate me; but since his return, it has not so much as appeared that he remembers any thing of what he has done; and I acknowledge I have a curiosity to know what it is has changed him so. It would not be very difficult for me to unravel this affair, added she; the viscount de Châtres, his intimate friend, is in love with a lady with whom I have some power, and I will know by that means the occasion of this alteration:---The queen-dauphin spoke with an air of sincerity, which

convinced the princess of Cleves, and in spite of herself she found her mind in a more calm and pleasing situation than it had been in before.

When she returned to her mother, she heard she was a great deal worse than she had left her; her fever was redoubled, and the days following it increased to so great a degree, that she was thought to be in danger. Madam de Cleves was in extreme grief on this occasion, and never stirred out of her mother's chamber. The prince of Cleves was there too almost every day, and all day long, partly out of affection to madam de Chartres, and partly to hinder his lady from abandoning herself to sorrow; but chiefly that he might have the pleasure of seeing her, his passion not being at all diminished.

The duke de Nemours, who had always had a great friendship for the prince of Cleves, had not failed to shew it since his return from Brussels; during the illness of madam de Chartres he frequently found means to see the princess of Cleves, pretending to want her husband, or to come to take him out to walk; he enquired for him at such hours as he knew very well he was not at home, and under pretence of waiting for him stay'd in madam de Cleves's antichamber, where there were always a great many people of quality: madam de Cleves often came there, and her grief did not make her seem less handsome in the eyes of the duke de Nemours; he made her sensible what interest he had in her affliction, and spoke to her with so submissive an air, that he easily convinced her, that the queen-dauphin was not the person he was in love with.

The seeing him at once gave her grief and pleasure; but when she no longer saw him, and reflected that the charm he carried about him when present was an introduction to love, she was very near imagining she hated him, out of the excessive grief which that thought gave her.

Madam de Chartres still grew worse and worse, so that they began to despair of her life; she heard what the

the physicians told her concerning the danger she was in, with a courage worthy her virtue and her piety. After they were gone, she caused every body to retire, and sent for madam de Cleves.

We must part, my dear daughter, said she, stretching out her hand to her; the danger I leave you in, and the occasion you have for me, adds to the regret I have to leave you. You have a passion for the duke de Nemours; I do not desire you to confess it; I am no longer in a condition to make use of that sincerity for your good. I have perceived this inclination a great while, but was not willing to speak to you of it at first, for fear of making you discover it yourself; you know it at present but too well; you are upon the brink of a precipice; great efforts must be used, and you must do great violence to your heart to save yourself: reflect what you owe to your husband; reflect what you owe to yourself; and think that you are going to lose that reputation which you have gained, and which I have so much at heart; call up, my dear daughter, all your courage and constancy; retire from court; oblige your husband to carry you away; do not be afraid of taking such resolutions, as being too harsh and difficult; however frightful they may appear at first, they will become more pleasant in time than the misfortunes that follow galantry. If any other motives than those of duty and virtue could have weight with you, I should tell you, that if any thing were capable of disturbing the happiness I hope for in the next world, it would be to see you fall like other women; but if this calamity must necessarily happen, I shall meet death with joy, as it will hinder me from being a witness of it.

Madam de Cleves bathed with tears her mother's hand, which she held fast locked in her own; nor was madam de Chartres less moved. Adieu! dear daughter, said she, let us put an end to a conversation which melts us both; and remember, if you are able, all that I have been saying to you.

When she had spoke this, she turned herself on the other side, and ordered her daughter to call her women, being unwilling either to hear her reply, or to speak any more. Madam de Cleves went out of her presence in a condition one need not describe; and madam de Chartres thought of nothing but preparing herself for death. She lived two days longer, during which she would not see her daughter again; her daughter was the only thing she had reluctance to part with.

Madam de Cleves was in the utmost affliction; her husband did not leave her; and no sooner was her mother expired, but he carried her into the country, that she might not have in her eye a place which could serve only to sharpen her sorrow, which was scarce to be equalled. Though tenderness and gratitude had the greatest share in her griefs, yet the ~~need~~ which she found she had of her mother to guard her against the duke of Nemours, added no small weight to them; she found she was unhappy in being left to herself, at a time when she was so little mistress of her own affections, and when she so much wished for somebody to pity and encourage her. The prince of Cleves's behaviour to her on this occasion, made her wish more ardently than ever, never to fail in her duty to him; she also expressed more friendship and affection for him than she had done before; she would not suffer him to leave her, and she seemed to think that his being constantly with her could defend her against the duke of Nemours.

The duke came to see the prince of Cleves in the country; he did what he could to pay a visit also to madam de Cleves, but she refused to receive him; and being persuaded she could not help finding something dangerously lovely in him, she made a strong resolution to forbear seeing him, and to avoid all occasions of it that were in her power.

The prince of Cleves went to Paris to make his court, and promised his lady to return the next day; but however, he did not return till the day after. I expected you.

you yesterday, said madam de Cleves to him on his arrival, and I ought to chide you for not having come as you promised; you know, if I was capable of feeling a new affliction in the condition I am in, it would be the death of madam de Tournon, and I have heard of it this morning; I should have been concerned, though I had not known her; 'tis a melancholy consideration to think that a lady, so young and handsome as she, should be dead in two days; but besides, she was the person in the world that pleased me most, and who appeared to have discretion equal to her beauty.

I am sorry I could not return yesterday, replied the prince of Cleves, but my presence was so necessary to the consolation of an unhappy man, that it was impossible for me to leave him. As for madam de Tournon, I advise you not to be concerned for her, if you lament her as a woman full of discretion, and worthy of your esteem.---You surprize me, answered madam de Cleves; I have heard you say several times, that there was not a lady at court you had a greater respect for.---It is true, replied he; but women are incomprehensible; and when I have seen them all, I think myself so happy in having you, that I cannot enough admire my good fortune.---You esteem me more than I deserve, answered madam de Cleves: you have not had experience enough yet to pronounce me worthy of you; but tell me, I beseech you, what it is has undeceived you with respect to madam de Tournon.---I have been undeceived a great while, replied he; I know that she was in love with the count de Sancerre, and that she gave him room to hope she would marry him.---I can't believe, said madam de Cleves, that madam de Tournon, after so extraordinary an aversion as she has shewn to marriage from the time she became a widow, and after the public declarations she has made that she would never marry again, should give hopes to Sancerre.---If she had given hopes to him

him only, replied the prince of Cleves, the wonder had not been so great ; but what is surprising is, that she gave hopes likewise to Etouteville at the same time : I'll let you know the whole history of this matter.

P A R T II.

YOU know the friendship there is betwixt Sancerre and me. Nevertheless, about two years ago, he fell in love with madam de Tournon, and concealed it from me with as much care as from the rest of the world ; I had not the least suspicion of it. Madam de Tournon as yet appeared inconsolable for the death of her husband, and lived in retirement with great austerity. Sancerre's sister was in a manner the only person she saw, and it was at her lodgings he became in love with her.

One evening there was to be a play at the Louvre, and the actors only waited for the coming of the king and madam de Valentinois ; when word was brought that she was indisposed, and that the king would not come. It was easy to see that the duchess's indisposition was nothing but some quarrel with the king ; every one knew the jealousy he had had of the mareschal de Brisac during his continuance at court ; but he had been set out some days on his return to Piemont, and one could not imagine what was the occasion of this falling out.

While I was speaking of this to Sancerre, monsieur d'Anville came into the room, and told me in a whisper, that the king was so exasperated, and so afflicted at the same time, that one would pity him ; that upon a late reconciliation between him and the duchess, after the quarrel

quarrel they had had about the mareschal de Brisfac, he had given her a ring, and desired her to wear it; and that as she was dressing herself to come to the play, he had missed it off her finger, and asked what was become of it; upon which she seemed in surprize that she had it not, and called to her woman for it; who unfortunately, or for want of being better instructed, made answer, they had not seen it four or five days.

It was, continued monsieur d'Anville, precisely so long since the Mareschal de Brisfac left the court, and the king made no doubt but she gave him the ring when she took her leave of him. The thought of this awaked, in so lively a manner, that jealousy which was not yet extinguished, that he fell into uncommon transports, and loaded her with a thousand reproaches; he is just gone into her apartment again in a great concern; but whether the reason is a more confirmed opinion that the duchess had made a sacrifice of the ring, or for fear of having disoblged her by his anger, I can't tell.

As soon as monsieur d'Anville had told me this news, I acquainted Sancerre with it; I told it him as a secret newly entrusted with me, and charged him to say nothing of it,

The next day I went early in the morning to my sister-in-law's, and found madam de Tournon at her bed-side, who had no great kindness for the duchess of Valentinois, and knew very well that my sister-in-law had no reason to be satisfied with her. Sancerre had been with her, after he went from the play, and had acquainted her with the quarrel between the king and the duchess; and madam de Tournon was come to tell it to my sister-in-law, without knowing or suspecting that it was I from whom her lover had it.

As soon as I advanced towards my sister-in-law, she told madam de Tournon, that they might trust me with what she had been telling her; and without waiting madam de Tournon's leave, she related to me, word by word, all I had told Sancerre the night before. You may

may judge what surprize I was in ; I looked hard at madam de Tournon, and she seemed disordered ; her disorder gave me a suspicion. I had told the thing to nobody but Sancerre ; he left me when the comedy was done, without giving any reason for it ; I remember to have heard him speak much in praise of madam de Tournon ; all these things opened my eyes, and I easily discerned there was an intrigue between them, and that he had seen her since he left me.

I was so stung to find he had concealed this adventure from me, that I said several things which made madam de Tournon sensible of the imprudence she had been guilty of. I led her back to her coach, and assured her, I envied the happiness of him who informed her of the king's quarrel with the duchess of Valentinois.

I went immediately in search of Sancerre, and severely reproached him ; I told him I knew of his passion for madam de Tournon, without saying how I came by the discovery ; he was forced to acknowledge it. I afterwards informed him what led me into the knowledge of it ; and he acquainted me with the detail of the whole affair. He told me, that though he was a younger brother, and far from being able to pretend to so good a match, nevertheless she was determined to marry him. I can't express the surprize I was in ; I told Sancerre he would do well to hasten the conclusion of the marriage, and that there was nothing he had not to fear from a woman, who had the artifice to support, in the eye of the public, appearances so distant from truth. He gave me in answer, that she was really concerned for the loss of her husband, but that the inclination she had for him had surmounted that affliction, and that she could not help discovering all on a sudden so great a change. He mentioned besides several other reasons in her excuse, which convinced me how much he was in love ; he assured me, he would bring her to consent that I should know his passion for her, especially since it was she herself who had made me suspect it ;

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in a word, he did oblige her to it, though with a great deal of difficulty, and I grew afterwards very deep in their confidence.

I never knew a lady behave herself in so agreeable a manner to her lover, but yet I was always shocked at the affectation she shewed in appearing so concerned for the loss of her husband. Sancerre was so much in love, and so well pleased with the treatment he received from her, that he scarce durst press her to conclude the marriage, for fear she should think he desired it rather out of interest than love; however, he spoke to her of it, and she seemed fully bent on marrying him; she began also to abandon her reserved manner of life, and to appear again in public; she visited my sister-in-law at hours when some of the court were usually there; Sancerre came there but seldom, but those who came every night, and frequently saw her there, thought her extremely beautiful.

She had not long quitted her solitude, when Sancerre imagined that her passion for him was cooled; he spoke of it several times to me; but I laid no great stress on the matter: but at last, when he told me, that instead of forwarding the marriage, she seemed to put it off, I began to think he was not to blame for being uneasy: I remonstrated to him, that if madam de Tournon's passion was abated after having continued two years, he ought not to be surprised at it; and that even supposing it was not abated, possibly it might not be strong enough to induce her to marry him; that he ought not to complain of it; that such a marriage in the judgment of the public would draw censures upon her, not only because he was not a suitable match for her, but also on account of the prejudice it would do her reputation; that therefore all he could desire was, that she might not deceive him, nor lead him into false expectations. I told him further, that if she had not resolution enough to marry him, or if she confessed she liked some other person better, he ought not to resent
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or be angry at it, but still continue his esteem and regard for her.

I give you, said I, the advice which I would take myself; for sincerity has such charms to me, that I believe if my mistress, or even my wife, ingenuously confessed she had a greater affection for another than for me, I might be troubled, but not exasperated; I would lay aside the character of a lover or a husband, to bestow my advice and my pity.

This discourse made madam de Cleves blush; and she found in it a certain similitude of her own condition, which very much surprized her, and gave her a concern, from which she could not recover in a great while.

Sancerre spoke to madam de Tournon, continued monsieur de Cleves, and told her all I had advised him; but she encouraged him with so many fresh assurances, and seemed so displeased at his suspicions, that she entirely removed them; nevertheless, she deferred the marriage until after a pretty long journey he was to make; but she behaved herself so well until his departure, and appeared so concerned at it, that I believed as well as he, that she sincerely loved him. He set out about three months ago; during his absence I have seldom seen madam de Tournon; you have entirely taken me up, and I only knew that he was speedily expected.

The day before yesterday, on my arrival at Paris, I heard she was dead; I sent to his lodgings to enquire if they had any news of him, and word was brought me, he came to town the night before, which was precisely the day that madam de Tournon died; I immediately went to see him, concluding in what condition I should find him; but his affliction far surpassed what I had imagined.

Never did I see a sorrow so deep and so tender: the moment he saw me he embraced me with tears; I shall never see her more, said he, I shall never see her more; she is dead, I was not worthy of her; but I shall soon follow her.

After

After this he was silent; and then, from time to time, continually repeating, *She is dead, I shall never see her more*, he returned to lamentations and tears, and continued as a man bereft of reason. He told me, he had not often received letters from her during his absence, but that he knew her too well to be surprized at it, and was sensible how shy and timorous she was of writing; he made no doubt but she would have married him upon his return; he considered her as the most amiable and constant of her sex; he thought himself tenderly beloved by her; he lost her the moment he expected to be united to her for ever; all these thoughts threw him into so violent an affliction, that I own I was deeply touched with it.

Nevertheless I was obliged to leave him to go to the King, but promised to return immediately; accordingly I did, and I was never so surprized as I was to find him entirely changed from what I had left him; he was standing in his chamber, his face full of fury, sometimes walking, sometimes stopping short, as if he had been distracted. Come, says he, and see the most forlorn wretch in the world; I am a thousand times more unhappy than I was a while ago, and what I have just heard of madam de Tournon is worse than her death.

I took what he said to be wholly the effect of grief, and could not imagine that there could be any thing worse than the death of a mistress one loves, and is beloved by; I told him, that so far as he kept his grief within bounds, I approved of it, and bore a part in it; but that I should no longer pity him, if he abandoned himself to despair, and flew from reason. I should be too happy if I had lost both my reason and my life, cried he; madam de Tournon was false to me, and I am informed of her unfaithfulness and treachery the very day after I was informed of her death; I am informed of it at a time when my soul is filled with the most tender love, and pierced with the sharpest grief that ever was; at a time, when the idea of her in my heart

heart is that of the most perfect woman who ever lived, and the most perfect with respect to me; I find I am mistaken, and that she does not deserve to be lamented by me; nevertheless, I have the same concern for her death, as if she had been true to me; and I have the same sensibility of her falshood, as if she were yet living; had I heard of her falshood before her death, jealousy, anger, and rage would have possessed me, and in some measure hardened me against the grief for her loss; but now my condition is such, that I am incapable of receiving comfort, and yet know not how to hate her.

You may judge of the surprize I was in at what Sançerre told me; I asked him how he came by the knowledge of it; and he told me, that the minute I went away from him, Etouteville, who is his intimate friend, but who nevertheless knew nothing of his love for madam de Tournon, came to see him; that as soon as he was sat down, he fell a-weeping, and asked his pardon for having concealed from him what he was going to tell him; that he begged him to have compassion of him, that he was come to open his heart to him, and that he was the person in the world the most afflicted for the death of madam de Tournon.

That name, said Sançerre, so astonished me, that though my first intention was to tell him I was more afflicted than he, I had not the power to speak: he continued to inform me, that he had been in love with her six months, that he was always desirous to let me know it, but she had expressly forbid him; and in so authoritative a manner, that he durst not disobey her; that he gained her in a manner as soon as he courted her; that they concealed their mutual passion for each other from the whole world; that he never visited her publicly; that he had the pleasure to remove her sorrow for her husband's death; and that lastly, he was to have married her at the very juncture in which she died: but that this marriage, which was an effect of love, would have appeared in her an effect of duty and obedience, she
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having prevailed upon her father to lay his commands on her to marry him, in order to avoid the appearance of too great an alteration in her conduct, which had seemed so averse to a second marriage.

While Etouteville was speaking to me, said Sancerre, I believed all he said, because I found so much probability in it, and because the time when he told me his passion for madam de Tournon commenced, is precisely the same with that when she appeared changed towards me; but the next moment I thought him a liar, or at least an enthusiast, and was upon the point of telling him so. Afterwards I came into an inclination of clearing up the matter, and proposed several questions, and laid my doubts before him; in a word, I proceeded so far to convince myself of my misfortune, that he asked me if I knew madam de Tournon's handwriting, and with that threw upon my bed four letters of her's and her picture; my brother came in that minute; Etouteville's face was so full of tears, that he was forced to withdraw to avoid being observed, and said, he would come again in the evening to fetch what he left with me; and as for me, I sent my brother away under pretence of being indisposed, so impatient was I to see the letters he had left, and so full of hopes to find something there that might make me disbelieve what Etouteville had been telling me; but alas! what did I not find there? What tendernefs! what oaths! what assurances of marriage! what letters! She never wrote the like to me. Thus, continued he, am I at once pierced with anguish for her death and for her falshood, two evils which have been often compared, but never felt before by the same person at the same time; I confess, to my shame, that still I am more grieved for her loss than for her change; I cannot think her guilty enough, to consent to her death: were she living, I should have the satisfaction to reproach her, and to revenge myself on her by making her sensible of her injustice; but I shall see her no more; I shall see her no more! This

is the greatest misfortune of all others; would I could restore her to life, though with the loss of my own! Yet what do I wish? If she were restored to life, she would live for Etouteville. How happy was I yesterday, cried he, how happy! I was the most afflicted man in the world; but my affliction was reasonable, and there was something pleasing in the very thought that I was inconsolable. To-day all my sentiments are unjust; I pay to a feigned passion the tribute of my grief, which I thought I owed to a real one; I can neither hate nor love her memory; I am incapable of consolation, and yet do not know how to grieve for her; take care, I conjure you, that I never see Etouteville; his very name raises horror in me; I know very well I have no reason of complaint against him; I was to blame in concealing from him my love for madam de Tournon; if he had known it, perhaps he would not have pursued her; perhaps she would not have been false to me; he came to me to impart his sorrows, and I cannot but pity him; alas! he had reason to love madam de Tournon, he was beloved by her, and will never see her more: notwithstanding, I perceive I cannot help hating him; once more I conjure you take care I may not see him:

Sancerre burst afterwards into tears, began again to regret madam de Tournon, and to speak to her, as if she were present, and say the softest things in the world; from these transports he passed to hatred, to complaints, to reproaches and imprecations against her. When I saw him in so desperate a condition, I found I should want somebody to assist me in appeasing his mind; accordingly I sent for his brother, whom I had left with the king; I met him in the anti-chamber, and acquainted him with Sancerre's condition: we gave the necessary orders to prevent his seeing Etouteville, and employed part of the night in endeavouring to make him capable of reason; this morning I found him yet more afflicted; his brother continued with him, and I returned to you.

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It is impossible to be more surprised than I am, said madam de Cleves; I thought madam de Tournon equally incapable of love and falsehood. Address and dissimulation, replied monsieur de Cleves, cannot go further than she carried them; observe, that when Sancerre thought her love to him was abated, it really was, and she began to love Etouteville; she told the last, that he removed her sorrow for her husband's death, and that he was the cause of her quitting her retirement. Sancerre believed the cause was nothing but a resolution she had taken not to seem any longer to be in such deep affliction; she made a merit to Etouteville of concealing her correspondence with him, and of seeming forced to marry him by her father's command, as if it was an effect of the care she had of her reputation; whereas it was only an artifice to forsake Sancerre, without his having reason to resent it. I must return, continued Mr. de Cleves, to see this unhappy man, and I believe you would do well to go to Paris too; it is time for you to appear in the world again, and receive the numerous visits which you cannot well dispense with.

Madam de Cleves agreed to the proposal, and returned to Paris the next day; she found herself much more easy with respect to the duke de Nemours than she had been; what her mother had told her on her death-bed, and her grief for her death, created a sort of suspension in her mind as to her passion for the duke, which made her believe it was quite effaced.

The evening of her arrival the queen-dauphin made her a visit; and after having condoled with her, told her, that in order to divert her from melancholy thoughts, she would let her know all that had passed at court in her absence; upon which she related to her a great many extraordinary things; but what I have the greatest desire to inform you of, added she, is, that it is certain the duke de Nemours is passionately in love; and that his most intimate friends are not only not entrusted in it, but cannot so much as guess who the person is he is in love

love with; nevertheless, this passion of his is so strong, as to make him neglect, or to speak more properly, abandon the hopes of a crown.

What poison did this discourse of the queen-dauphin carry in it for madam de Cleves! How could she but know herself to be the person whose name was not known; and how could she help being filled with tenderness and gratitude, when she learned, by a way not in the least liable to suspicion, that the duke, who had already touched her heart, concealed his passion from the whole world, and neglected for her sake the hopes of a crown? It is impossible to express what she felt, or to describe the tumult that was raised in her soul. Had the queen-dauphin observed her closely, she might easily have discerned, that what she had been saying was not indifferent to her; but as she had not the least suspicion of the truth, she continued her discourse without minding her: Monsieur d'Anville, added she, from whom, as I just told you, I had all this, believes I know more of it than himself; and he has so great an opinion of my beauty, that he is satisfied I am the only person capable of creating so great a change in the duke of Nemours.

These last words of the queen-dauphin gave madam de Cleves a sort of uneasiness very different from that which she had a few minutes before. I can easily come into monsieur d'Anville's opinion, answered she; and it is very probable, madam, that nothing less than a princess of your merit could make him despise the queen of England.---I would own it to you, if I knew it, replied the queen-dauphin, and I should know it if it were true; such passions as these never escape the sight of those who occasion them; they are the first to discern them; the duke of Nemours has never shewed me any thing but slight complaisances; and yet I find so great a difference betwixt his present and former behaviour to me, that I can assure you, I am not the cause of the indifference he expresses for the crown of England.

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But I forget myself in your company, added the queen-dauphin, and do not remember that I am to wait upon Madame. Having said this, she took her leave of madam de Cleves, and the next day the king and the queens went to visit her. The duke de Nemours, who had expected her return with the utmost impatience, and languished for an opportunity of speaking to her in private, contrived to wait upon her at an hour when the company would probably be withdrawing, and nobody else come in; he succeeded in his design, and came in when the last visitors were going away.

The princess was sitting on her bed, and the hot weather, together with the sight of the duke de Nemours, gave her a blush that added to her beauty; he sat over against her with a certain timorous respect that flows from a real love; he continued some minutes without speaking; nor was she less at a loss, so that they were both silent a good while: at last, the duke condoled with her for her mother's death.---Madam de Cleves was glad to give the conversation that turn, spoke a considerable time of the great loss she had had, and at last said, that though time had taken off from the violence of her grief, yet the impression would always remain so strong, that it would entirely change her humour.---Great troubles and excessive passions, replied the duke, make great alterations in the mind; as for me, I am quite another man since my return from Flanders; abundance of people have taken notice of this change, and the queen-dauphin spoke to me of it yesterday. It is true, replied the princess, she has observed it, and I think I remember to have heard her say something about it.---I am not sorry, madam, replied the duke, that she has discerned it; but I could wish some others in particular had discerned it too. There are persons to whom we dare give no other evidences of the passion we have for them, but by things which do not concern them; and when we dare not let them know we love them, we should be glad, at least, to have them see we are not desirous of being

loved by any other; we should be glad to convince them, that no other beauty, though of the highest rank, has any charms for us; and that a crown would be too dear, if purchased with no less a price than absence from her we adore. Women ordinarily, continued he, judge of the passion one has for them, by the care one takes to oblige, and to be assiduous about them; but it is no hard matter to do this, though they be ever so little amiable; not to give one's self up to the pleasure of pursuing them, to shun them through fear of discovering to the public, and in a manner to themselves, the sentiments one has for them, here lies the difficulty; and what still more demonstrates the truth of one's passion is, the becoming entirely changed from what one was; and the having no longer a gust either for ambition or pleasure, after one has employed one's whole life in pursuit of both.

The princess of Cleves readily apprehended how far she was concerned in this discourse; one while she seemed of opinion, that she ought not to suffer such an address; another, she thought she ought not to seem to understand it, or shew she supposed herself meant by it; she thought she ought to speak, and she thought she ought to be silent; the duke of Nemours's discourse equally pleased and offended her; she was convinced by it of the truth of all the queen-dauphin had led her to think; she found in it somewhat galant and respectful, but also somewhat bold and too intelligible; the inclination she had for the duke gave her an anxiety which it was not in her power to controul; the most obscure expressions of a man that pleases, move more than the most open declaration of one we have no liking for; she made no answer: the duke de Nemours took notice of her silence, which perhaps would have proved no ill presage, if the coming in of the prince of Cleves had not ended at once the conversation and the visit.

The prince was coming to give his wife a further account of Sancerre, but she was not over curious to learn the

the sequel of that adventure. She was so much taken up with what had just passed, that she could hardly conceal the embarrassment she was in. When she was at liberty to muse upon it, she plainly saw she was mistaken, when she thought she was indifferent as to the duke de Nemours; what he had said to her had made all the impression he could desire, and had entirely convinced her of his passion; besides, the duke's actions agreed too well with his words, to leave her the least doubt about it; she no longer flattered herself that she did not love him; all her care was not to let him discover it, a task of which she had already experienced the difficulty. She knew the only way to succeed in it was to avoid seeing him; and as her mourning gave her an excuse for being more retired than usual, she made use of that pretence not to go to places where he might see her. She was full of melancholy; her mother's death was the seeming cause of it, and no suspicion was had of any other.

The duke de Nemours, not seeing her any more, fell into desperation; and knowing he should not meet with her in any public assembly, or at any diversions the court joined in, he could not prevail upon himself to appear there; and therefore he pretended a great love for hunting, and made matches for that sport on the days when the queens kept their assemblies; a slight indisposition had served him a good while as an excuse for staying at home, and declining to go to places where he knew very well that madam de Cleves would not be.

The prince of Cleves was ill almost at the same time, and the princess never stirred out of his room during his illness; but when he grew better, and received company, and among others the duke de Nemours, who staid with him the greatest part of the day, she found she could not continue any longer there; and yet in the first visits he made she had not the resolution to go out; she had been too long without seeing him, to be able to resolve to see him no more; the duke had the address, by discourses that appeared altogether general, but which

she understood very well by the relation they had to what he had said privately to her, to let her know that he went a-hunting only to be more at liberty to think of her, and that the reason of his not going to the assemblies was her not being there.

At last she executed the resolution she had taken to go out of her husband's room whenever he was there, though this was doing the utmost violence to herself: the duke perceived she avoided him, and the thought of it touched him to the heart.

The prince of Cleves did not immediately take notice of his wife's conduct in this particular; but at last he perceived she went out of the room when there was company there. He spoke to her of it, and she told him, that she did not think it consistent with decency to be every evening among the gay young courtiers; that she hoped he would allow her to live in a more reserved manner than she had done hitherto; that the virtue and presence of her mother authorised her in many liberties, which could not otherwise be justified in a woman of her age.

Monsieur de Cleves, who had a great deal of facility and complaisance for his wife, did not shew it on this occasion, but told her he would by no means consent to her altering her conduct. She was upon the point of telling him, it was reported that the duke de Nemours was in love with her; but she had not the power to name him: besides, she thought it disingenuous to disguise the truth, and make use of pretences to a man who had so good an opinion of her.

Some days after the king was with the queen at the assembly-hour, and the discourse turned upon nativities and predictions; the company were divided in their opinion, as to what credit ought to be given to them; the queen professed to have great faith in them, and maintained, that after so many things had come to pass as they had been foretold, one could not doubt but there was something of certainty in that science; others affirmed,

affirmed, that of an infinite number of predictions so very few proved true, that the truth of those few ought to be looked upon as an effect of chance.

I have formerly been very curious and inquisitive as to futurity, said the king; but I have seen so many false and improbable things, that I am satisfied there is no truth in that pretended art. Not many years since there came hither a man of great reputation in astrology; every body went to see him; I went among others, but without saying who I was, and I carried with me the duke of Guise and Descars, and made them go in first; nevertheless the astrologer addressed himself first to me, as if he had concluded me to be their master; perhaps he knew me, and yet he told me one thing that was very unsuitable to my character, if he had known me; his prediction was, that I should be killed in a duel; he told the duke of Guise, that he should die of a wound received behind; and he told Descars, he should be knocked of the head by the kick of a horse. The duke of Guise was a little angry at the prediction, as if it imported he should run away; nor was Descars better pleased, to find he was to make his exit by so unfortunate an accident; in a word, we went away all three of us very much out of humour with the astrologer. I do not know what will happen to the duke of Guise and Descars, but there is not much probability of my being killed in a duel; the king of Spain and I have just made peace; and if we had not, I question whether we should have fought, or if I should have challenged him, as the king my father did Charles V.

After the king had related the misfortune that was foretold him, those who had defended astrology abandoned the argument, and agreed there was no credit to be given to it. For my part, said the duke de Nemours aloud, I have the least reason of any man in the world to credit it; and then turning himself to madam de Cleves, near whom he stood, It has been foretold me,



says, he very softly, that I should be happy in a person for whom I should have the most violent and respectful passion; you may judge, madam, if I ought to believe in predictions.

The queen-dauphin, who believed, from what the duke had spoke aloud, that what he whispered was some false prediction that had been told him, asked him what it was he said to madam de Cleves; had he had a less ready wit, he would have been surprized at this question; but without any hesitation, What I said to her, madam, answered he, was, that it had been predicted to me, that I should be raised to a higher fortune than my most sanguine hopes could lead me to expect.--- If nothing has been foretold you but this, replied the queen-dauphin, smiling, and thinking of the affair of England, I would not advise you to decry astrology; you may have reasons hereafter to offer in defence of it. Madam de Cleves apprehended the queen-dauphin's meaning; but knew withal, that the fortune the duke of Nemours spoke of was not that of being king of England.

The time of her mourning being expired, the princess of Cleves was obliged to make her appearance again, and go to court as usual; she saw the duke de Nemours at the queen-dauphin's apartment; she saw him at the prince of Cleves's, where he often came in company of other young noblemen, to avoid being remarked; yet she never once saw him, but it gave her a pain that could not escape his observation.

However industrious she was to avoid being looked at by him, and to speak less to him than to any other, some things escaped her in an unguarded moment, which convinced him he was not indifferent to her; a man of less discernment than he would not have perceived it; but he had already so often been the object of love, that it was easy for him to know when he was loved. He found the chevalier de Guise was his rival; and the chevalier knew that the duke de Nemours was his;

his ; monsieur de Guise was the only man in the court that had unravelled this affair, his interest having made him more clear-sighted than others ; the knowledge they had of each other's sentiments, created an opposition between them in every thing, which, however, did not break out into an open quarrel ; they were always of different parties at the running at the ring, at tournaments, and all diversions the king delighted in ; and their emulation was so great, it could not be concealed.

Madam de Cleves frequently revolved in her mind the affair of England ; she believed the duke de Nemours could not resist the advice of the king, and the instances of Lignerolles ; she was very much concerned to find that Lignerolles was not yet returned, and she impatiently expected him ; her inclinations strongly swayed her to inform herself exactly of the state of this affair ; but the same reasons, which raised in her that curiosity, obliged her to conceal it ; and she only enquired of the beauty, the wit, and the temper of queen Elizabeth. A picture of that princess had been brought the king, which madam de Cleves found much handsomer than she could have wished for ; and she could not forbear saying, the picture flattered. I do not think so, replied the queen-dauphin ; that princess has the reputation of being very handsome, and of having a very exalted genius, and I know she has always been proposed to me as a model worthy my imitation ; she cannot but be very handsome, if she resembles her mother, Anne Bullen ; never had woman so many charms and allurements, both in her person and her humour ; I have heard say she had something remarkably lively in her countenance ; very different from what is usually found in other English beauties.---I think, replied madam de Cleves, 'tis said she was born in France.---Those who imagine so are mistaken, replied the queen-dauphin ; I will give you her history in a few words.

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She was of a good family in England ; Henry VIIIth was in love with her sister and her mother, and it has been even suspected by some, that she was his daughter ; she came to France with Henry VII.'s sister, who married Lewis XIIth ; that princess, who was full of youth and galantry, left the court of France with great reluctance after her husband's death ; but Anne Bullen, who had the same inclinations as her mistress, could not prevail with herself to go away ; the late king was in love with her, and she continued maid of honour to queen Claude ; that queen died, and Margaretta, the king's sister, duchess of Alençon, and since queen of Navarre, whose story you know, took her into her service, where she imbibed the principles of the new religion ; she returned afterwards to England, and there charmed all the world. She had the manners of France, which please in all countries ; she sung well, she danced finely ; she was a maid of honour to queen Catherine, and Henry VIIIth fell desperately in love with her.

Cardinal Wolfey, his favourite and first minister, being dissatisfied with the emperor for not having favoured his pretensions to the Papacy, in order to revenge himself of him, contrived an alliance between France and the king his master ; he put it into the head of Henry VIIIth, that his marriage with the emperor's aunt was null, and advised him to marry the duchess of Alençon, whose husband was just dead ; Anne Bullen, who was not without ambition, considered queen Catherine's divorce as a means that would bring her to the crown ; she began to give the king of England impressions of the Lutheran religion, and engaged the late king to favour at Rome Henry VIIIth's divorce, in hopes of his marrying the duchess of Alençon ; cardinal Wolfey, that he might have an opportunity of treating this affair, procured himself to be sent to France upon other pretences ; but his master was so far from permitting him to propose this marriage,

marriage, that he sent him express orders to Calais not to speak of it.

Cardinal Wolsey, at his return from France, was received with as great honours as could have been paid to the king himself; never did any favourite carry his pride and vanity to so great a height; he managed an interview between the two kings at Bologne, when Francis I. would have given the upper-hand to Henry VIIIth; but he refused to accept it. They treated one another by turns with the utmost magnificence, and presented to each habits of the same sort with those they wore themselves. I remember to have heard say, that those the late king sent to the king of England, were of crimson sattin beset all over with pearls and diamonds, and a robe of white velvet embroidered with gold. After having staid some time at Bologne, they went to Calais. Anne Bullen was lodged in Henry VIIIth's court with the train of a queen; and Francis I. made her the same presents, and paid her the same honours as if she had been really so. In a word, after a passion of nine years continuance king Henry married her, without waiting for the dissolving of his first marriage. The Pope precipitately thundered out excommunications against him; which so provoked king Henry, that he declared himself head of the church, and drew after him all England into the unhappy change in which you see it.

Anne Bullen did not long enjoy her greatness; for when she thought herself most secure of it by the death of queen Catherine, one day as she was seeing a match of running at the ring made by the viscount Rochefort her brother, the king was struck with such a jealousy, that he abruptly left the show, went away to London, and gave orders for arresting the queen, the viscount Rochefort, and several others whom he believed to be the lovers or confidants of that princess. Though this jealousy in appearance had its birth that moment, the king had been long possessed with it by the viscountess

D. 5

Rochefort,

Rochefort, who not being able to bear the strict intimacy between her husband and the queen, represented it to the king as a criminal commerce; so that that prince, who was besides in love with Jane Seymour, thought of nothing but ridding himself of Anne Bullen; and in less than three weeks he caused the queen and her brother to be tried, had them both beheaded, and married Jane Seymour. He had afterwards several wives, whom he divorced or put to death; and among others Catherine Howard, whose confidant the viscount Rochefort was, and who was beheaded with her. Thus was she punished for having falsely accused Anne Bullen. And Henry VIIIth died, being become excessive fat.

All the ladies that were present when the queen-dauphin made this relation, thanked her for having given them so good an account of the court of England; and among the rest madam de Cleves, who could not forbear asking several questions concerning queen Elizabeth.

The queen-dauphin caused pictures in miniature to be drawn of all the beauties of the court, in order to send them to the queen her mother. One day, when that of madam de Cleves was finished, the queen-dauphin came to spend the afternoon with her; the duke de Nemours did not fail to be there; he let slip no opportunities of seeing madam de Cleves, yet without appearing to contrive them. She looked so pretty that day, that he would have fell in love with her, though he had not been so before: however, he durst not keep his eyes fixed upon her, while she was sitting for her picture, for fear of shewing too much the pleasure he took in looking at her.

The queen-dauphin asked monsieur de Cleves for a little picture he had of his wife's, to compare it with that which was just drawn; every body gave their judgment of the one and the other; and madam de Cleves ordered the painter to mend something in the head.

head-dress of that which had been just brought in ; the painter, in obedience to her, took the picture out of the case in which it was, and having mended it, laid it again on the table.

The duke de Nemours had long wished to have a picture of madam de Cleves ; when he saw that which monsieur de Cleves had, he could not resist the temptation of stealing it from a husband, who, he believed, was tenderly loved ; and he thought, that among so many persons as were in the same room, he should be no more liable to suspicion than another.

The queen-dauphin was sitting on the bed, and whispering to madam de Cleves, who was standing before her. Madam de Cleves, through one of the curtains that was but half-drawn, spied the duke de Nemours with his back to the table, that stood at the bed's feet, and perceived, that without turning his face he took something very dextrously from off the table ; she presently guessed it was her picture ; and was in such concern about it, that the queen-dauphin observed she did not attend to what she said, and asked her aloud what it was she looked at. At those words, the duke de Nemours turned about, and met full the eyes of madam de Cleves that were still fixed upon him ; he thought it not impossible but she might have seen what he had done.

Madam de Cleves was not a little perplexed ; it was reasonable to demand her picture of him ; but to demand it publicly, was to discover to the whole world the sentiments which the duke had for her ; and to demand it in private, would be to engage him to speak of his love : she judged, after all, it was better to let him keep it ; and she was glad to grant him a favour which she could do without his knowing that she granted it. The duke de Nemours, who observed her perplexity, and partly guessed the cause of it, came up, and told her softly, If you have seen what I have ventured to do, be so good, madam, as to let me believe you are

D. 6.

ignorant

ignorant of it ; I dare ask no more. Having said this he withdrew, without waiting for her answer.

The queen-dauphin went to take a walk, attended with the rest of the ladies ; and the duke de Nemours went home to shut himself up in his closet, not being able to support in public the ecstacy he was in on having a picture of madam de Cleves ; he tasted every thing that was sweet in love ; he was in love with the finest woman of the court ; he found she loved him against her will ; and saw in all her actions, that sort of care and embarrassment which love produces in young and innocent hearts.

At night great search was made for the picture ; and having found the case it used to be kept in, they never suspected it had been stolen, but thought it might have fallen out by chance. The prince of Cleves was very much concerned for the loss of it ; and after having searched for it a great while to no purpose, he told his wife, but with an air that shewed he did not think so, that without doubt she had some secret lover, to whom she had given the picture, or who had stole it ; and that none but a lover would have been contented with the picture without the case.

These words, though spoke in jest, made a lively impression in the mind of madam de Cleves ; they gave her remorse, and she reflected on the violence of her inclination, which hurried her on to love the duke of Nemours ; she found she was no longer mistress of her words or countenance ; she imagined that Lignerolles was returned ; that she had nothing to fear from the affair of England, nor any cause to suspect the queen-dauphin ; in a word, that she had no refuge or defence against the duke de Nemours but by retiring ; but as she was not at her liberty to retire, she found herself in a very great extremity, and ready to fall into the last misfortune, that of discovering to the duke the inclination she had for him. She remembered all that her mother had said to her on her death-bed, and the advice which she gave her, to enter on any resolutions, however difficult

difficult they might be, rather than engage in gallantry: she remembered also what monsieur de Cleves had told her, when he gave an account of madam de Tournon. She thought she ought to acknowledge to him the inclination she had for the duke de Nemours, and in that thought she continued a long time; afterwards, she was astonished to have entertained so ridiculous a design, and fell back again into her former perplexity of not knowing what to chuse.

The peace was signed; and the lady Elizabeth, after a great deal of reluctance, resolved to obey the king her father. The duke of Alva was appointed to marry her in the name of the Catholic king, and was very soon expected. The duke of Savoy too, who was to marry the king's sister, and whose nuptials were to be solemnized at the same time, was expected every day. The king thought of nothing but how to grace these marriages with such diversions as might display the politeness and magnificence of his court. Interludes and comedies of the best kind were proposed; but the king thought those entertainments too private, and desired to have somewhat of a more splendid nature: he resolved to make a solemn tournament, to which strangers might be invited, and of which the people might be spectators. The princess and young lords very much approved the king's design, especially the duke of Ferrara, monsieur de Guise, and the duke de Nemours, who surpassed the rest in these sorts of exercises. The king made choice of them to be, together with himself, the four champions of the tournament.

Proclamation was made throughout the kingdom, that on the 15th of June, in the city of Paris, his most Christian majesty, and the princes Alphonse d'Été duke of Ferrara, Francis of Lorraine duke of Guise, and James of Savoy duke of Nemours, would hold an open tournament against all comers. The first combat to be on horse-back in the lists, with double armour, to break four lances, and one for the ladies; the second combat with swords, one to one, or two to two, as the judges

judges of the field should direct; the third combat on foot, three pushes of pikes, and six hits with the sword. The champions to furnish lances, swords, and pikes, at the choice of the combatants. Whoever did not manage his horse in the career to be put out of the lists; four judges of the field to give orders. The combatants, who should break most lances and perform best, to carry the prize, the value whereof to be at the discretion of the judges: all the combatants, as well French as strangers, to be obliged to touch one or more, at their choice, of the shields that should hang on the pillar at the end of the lists, where a herald at arms should be ready to receive them, and enrol them according to their quality, and the shields they had touched: the combatants to be obliged to cause their shields and arms to be brought by a gentleman, and hung up at the pillar three days before the tournament, otherwise not to be admitted without leave of the champions.

A spacious list was made near the Bastille, which begun from the Chateau des Tournelles, and crossed the street of St. Anthony, and extended as far as the king's stables; on both sides were built scaffolds and amphitheatres, which formed a sort of galleries that made a very fine sight, and were capable of containing an infinite number of people. The princes and lords were wholly taken up in providing what was necessary for a splendid appearance, and in mingling in their cyphers and devices somewhat of galantry, that had relation to the ladies they were in love with.

A few days before the duke of Alva's arrival, the king made a match at tennis with the duke de Nemours, the chevalier de Guise, and the viscount de Chartres. The queens came to see them play, attended with the ladies of the court, and among others madam de Cleves. After the game was ended, as they went out of the tennis-court, Chatelart came up to the queen-dauphin, and told her, Fortune had put into his hands a letter of galantry, that dropped out of the duke de Nemours's

pocket.

pocket. This queen, who was always very curious in what related to the duke, bid Chatelart give her the letter; he did so, and she followed the queen her mother-in-law, who was going with the king to see them work at the lists. After they had been there some time, the king caused some horses to be brought that had been lately taken in; and though they were not as yet thoroughly managed, he was for mounting one of them, and ordered his attendants to mount others. The king and the duke de Nemours hit upon the most fiery and high-mettled of them. The horses were ready to fall foul on one another, when the duke of Nemours, for fear of hurting the king, retreated abruptly, and ran back his horse against a pillar with so much violence, that the shock of it made him stagger. The company ran up to him, and he was thought considerably hurt; but the princess of Cleves thought the hurt much greater than any one else. The interest she had in it gave her an apprehension and concern which she took no care to conceal; she came up to him with the queens, and with a countenance so changed, that one less concerned than the chevalier de Guise might have perceived it. Perceive it he immediately did, and was much more intent upon the condition madam de Cleves was in, than upon that of the duke de Nemours. The blow the duke had given himself had so stunned him, that he continued some time leaning his head on those who supported him; when he raised himself up, he immediately viewed madam de Cleves, and saw in her face the concern she was in for him, and he looked upon her in a manner which made her sensible how much he was touched with it: afterwards he thanked the queens for the goodness they had expressed to him, and made apologies for the condition he had been in before them; and then the king ordered him to go to rest.

Madam de Cleves, after she was recovered from the fright she had been in, presently reflected on the tokens she had given of it. The chevalier de Guise did not
suffer

suffer her to continue long in the hope that nobody had perceived it, but giving her his hand to lead her out of the lists, I have more cause to complain, madam, said he, than the duke de Nemours; pardon me, if I forget for a moment that profound respect I have always had for you, and shew you how much my heart is grieved for what my eyes have just seen; this is the first time I have ever been so bold as to speak to you, and it will be the last. Death, or at least eternal absence, will remove me from a place where I can live no longer, since I have now lost the melancholy comfort I had of believing that all who behold you with love are as unhappy as myself.

Madam de Cleves made only a confused answer, as if she had not understood what the chevalier's words meant: at another time she would have been offended, if he had mentioned the passion he had for her; but at this moment she felt nothing but the affliction to know, that he had observed the passion she had for the duke de Nemours.

Madam de Cleves, when she came out of the lists, went to the queen's apartment, with her thoughts wholly taken up with what had passed. The duke de Nemours came there soon after, richly dressed, and like one wholly insensible of the accident that had befallen him; he appeared even more gay than usual; and the joy he was in for what he had discovered, gave him an air that very much encreased his natural agreeableness. The whole court was surprised when he came in; and there was nobody but asked him how he did, except madam de Cleves, who staid near the chimney, pretending not to see him. The king coming out of his closet, and seeing him among others, called him to talk to him about his late accident. The duke passed by madam de Cleves, and said softly to her, Madam, I have received this day some marks of your pity, but they were not such as I am most worthy of. Madam de Cleves suspected that he had taken notice of the concern she had

had been in for him, and what he now said convinced her she was not mistaken; it gave her a great deal of concern, to find she was so little mistress of herself, as not to have been able to conceal her inclinations from the chevalier de Guise; nor was she less concerned to see that the duke de Nemours was acquainted with them; yet this last grief was not so entire, but there was a certain mixture of pleasure in it.

The queen-dauphin, who was extremely impatient to know what there was in the letter which Chatelart had given her, came up to madam de Cleves. Go read this letter, says she; it is addressed to the duke of Nemours, and was probably sent him by the mistress for whom he has forsaken all others: if you cannot read it now, keep it, and bring it me about bed-time, and inform me if you know the hand. Having said this, the queen-dauphin went away from madam de Cleves, and left her in such astonishment, that she was not able for some time to stir out of the place. The impatience and grief she was in not permitting her to stay at court, she went home before her usual hour of retirement; she trembled with the letter in her hand, her thoughts were full of confusion, and she experienced I know not what of insupportable grief that she had never felt before. No sooner was she in her closet, but she opened the letter, and found it as follows:

‘ I Have loved you too well, to leave you in a belief
 ‘ that the change you observe in me is an effect of light-
 ‘ ness; I must inform you, that your falshood is the
 ‘ cause of it. You will be surpris’d to hear me speak of
 ‘ your falshood; you have disssembled it with so much
 ‘ skill, and I have taken so much care to conceal my
 ‘ knowledge of it from you, that you have reason to be
 ‘ surpris’d at the discovery; I am myself in wonder,
 ‘ that I have discovered nothing of it to you before;
 ‘ never was grief equal to mine; I thought you had the
 ‘ most violent passion for me; I did not conceal that
 ‘ which I had for you, and at the time that I acknow-
 ‘ ledged

‘ ledged it to you without reserve, I found that you deceived me, that you loved another, and that, in all probability, I was made a sacrifice to this new mistress. I knew it the day you run at the ring, and this was the reason I was not there. At first I pretended an indisposition in order to conceal my sorrow; but afterwards I really fell into one, nor could a constitution, delicate like mine, support so violent a shock. When I began to be better, I still counterfeited sickness, that I might have an excuse for not seeing and for not writing to you; besides, I was willing to have time to come to a resolution in what manner to deal with you; I took and quitted the same resolution twenty times; but at last I concluded you deserved not to see my grief, and I resolved not to shew you the least mark of it. I had a desire to bring down your pride, by letting you see, that my passion for you declined of itself: I thought I should by this lessen the value of the sacrifice you had made of me, and was loth you should have the pleasure of appearing more amiable in the eyes of another, by shewing her how much I loved you; I resolved to write to you in a cold and languishing manner, that she, to whom you gave my letters, might perceive my love was at an end; I was unwilling she should have the satisfaction of knowing I was sensible that she triumphed over me, or that she should encrease her triumph by my despair and complaints. I thought I should punish you too little by merely breaking with you, and that my ceasing to love you would give you but a slight concern, after you had first forsaken me; I found it was necessary you should love me, to feel the smart of not being loved, which I so severely experienced myself; I was of opinion, that if any thing could rekindle that flame, it would be to let you see that mine was extinguished; but to let you see it through an endeavour to conceal it from you, as if I wanted the power to acknowledge it to you. This resolution I adhered to, I found it
‘ difficult

' difficult to take ; and when I saw you again I thought
 ' it impossible to execute. I was ready a hundred times
 ' to break out into tears and complaints ; my ill state of
 ' health, which still continued, served as a disguise to
 ' hide from you the affliction and trouble I was in ; after-
 ' ward I was supported by the pleasure of dissembling
 ' with you, as you had done with me ; however, it was
 ' doing so apparent a violence to myself to tell you, or to
 ' write to you that I loved you, that you immediately
 ' perceived I had no mind to let you see my affection
 ' was altered. You was touched with this, you com-
 ' plained of it. I endeavoured to remove your fears ;
 ' but it was done in so forced a manner, that you was
 ' still more convinced by it I no longer loved you : in
 ' short, I did all I intended to do. The fantasticalness
 ' of your heart was such, that you advanced towards
 ' me in proportion as you saw I retreated from you. I
 ' have enjoyed all the pleasure which can arise from re-
 ' venge. I plainly saw, that you loved me more than
 ' you had ever done ; and I shewed you I had no longer
 ' any love for you. I had even reason to believe that
 ' you had entirely abandoned her, for whom you had
 ' forsaken me ; I had ground too to be satisfied you had
 ' never spoken to her concerning me : but neither your
 ' discretion in that particular, nor the return of your
 ' affection, can make amends for your inconstancy ; your
 ' heart has been divided between me and another, and
 ' you have deceived me ; this is sufficient wholly to take
 ' from me the pleasure I found in being loved by you,
 ' as I thought I deserved to be ; and to confirm me in
 ' the resolution I have taken, never to see you more,
 ' which you are so much surpris'd at.'

Madam de Cleves read this letter, and read it over
 again several times, without knowing, at the same time,
 what she had read ; she saw only that the duke de Ne-
 mours did not love her as she imagined, and that he
 loved others who were no less deceived by him than she.
 What a discovery was this for a person in her condition,
 who

who had a violent passion, who had just given marks of it to a man whom she judged unworthy of it, and to another whom she used ill for his sake! Never was affliction so cutting as hers; she imputed the piercingness of it to what had happened that day; and believed, that if the duke de Nemours had not had ground to believe she loved him, she should not have cared whether he loved another or not: but she deceived herself; and this evil which she found so insupportable was jealousy, with all the horrors it can be accompanied with. This letter discovered to her a piece of galantry the duke de Nemours had been long engaged in. She saw the lady who writ it was a person of wit and merit, and deserved to be loved. She found she had more courage than herself; and envied her the power she had had of concealing her sentiments from the duke de Nemours. By the close of the letter, she saw this lady thought herself beloved, and presently suspected, that the discretion the duke had shewed in his addresses to her, and which she had been so much taken with, was only an effect of his passion for this other mistress, whom he was afraid of disobliging. In short, she thought of every thing that could add to her grief and despair. What reflections did she not make on herself, and on the advices her mother had given her! How did she repent, that she had not persisted in her resolution of retiring, though against the will of monsieur de Cleves; or that she had not pursued her intentions of acknowledging to him the inclination she had for the duke of Nemours! She was convinced, she would have done better to discover it to a husband, whose goodness she was sensible of, and whose interest it would have been to conceal it, than to let it appear to a man who was unworthy of it, who deceived her, who perhaps made a sacrifice of her, and who had no view in being loved by her but to gratify his pride and vanity: in a word, she found, that all the calamities that could befall her, and all the extremities she could be reduced to, were less than that single one of having discovered to the duke de

de Nemours that she loved him, and of knowing that he loved another: all her comfort was to think, that after the knowledge of this she had nothing more to fear from herself, and that she should be entirely eased of the inclination she had for the duke.

She never thought of the orders the queen-dauphin had given her, to come to her when she went to rest: she went to bed herself, and pretended to be ill; so that when monsieur de Cleves came home from the king, they told him she was asleep. But she was far from that tranquillity which inclines to sleep; all the night she did nothing but torment herself, and read over and over the letter in her hand.

Madam de Cleves was not the only person whom this letter disturbed. The viscount de Chartres, who had lost it, and not the duke de Nemours, was in the utmost inquietude about it. He had been that evening with the duke of Guise, who had given a great entertainment to the duke of Ferrara his brother-in-law, and to all the young people of the court: it happened that the discourse turned upon ingenious letters; and the viscount de Chartres said he had one about him the finest that ever was writ: they urged him to shew it; and on his excusing himself, the duke de Nemours insisted he had no such letter, and that what he said was only out of vanity; the viscount made him answer, that he urged his discretion to the utmost, that nevertheless he would not shew the letter; but he would read some parts of it, which would make it appear few men received the like. Having said this, he would have taken out the letter, but could not find it; he searched for it to no purpose. The company rallied him about it; but he seemed so disturbed, that they forbore to speak further of it: he withdrew sooner than the others, and went home with great impatience, to see if he had not left the letter there. While he was looking for it, one of the queen's pages came to tell him, that the viscountess d'Uzez had thought it necessary to give him speedy advice,

advice, that it was said at the queen's court, that he had dropped a letter of galantry out of his pocket while he was playing at tennis; that great part of what the letter contained had been related; that the queen had expressed a great curiosity to see it, and had sent to one of her gentlemen for it; but that he answered, he had given it to Chatelart.

The page added many other particulars which heightened the viscount's concern; he went out that minute to go to a gentleman who was an intimate friend of Chatelart's; and though it was a very unseasonable hour, made him get out of bed to go and fetch the letter, without letting him know who it was had sent for it, or who had lost it. Chatelart, who was prepossessed with an opinion that it belonged to the duke de Nemours, and that the duke was in love with the queen-dauphin, did not doubt but it was he who had sent to redemand it; and so answered, with a malicious sort of joy, that he had put the letter into the queen-dauphin's hands. The gentleman brought this answer back to the viscount de Chartres, which encreased the uneasiness he was under already, and added new vexations to it: after having continued some time in an irresolution what to do, he found that the duke de Nemours was the only person whose assistance could draw him out of this intricate affair.

Accordingly he went to the duke's house, and entered his room about break of day. What the duke had discovered the day before with respect to the princess of Cleves had given him such agreeable ideas, that he slept very sweetly; he was very much surprised to find himself waked by the viscount de Chartres, and asked him, if he came to disturb his rest so early, to be revenged of him for what he had said last night at supper. The viscount's looks soon convinced him, that he came upon a serious business; I am come, said he, to entrust you with the most important affair of my life; I know very well, you are not obliged to me for the confidence I place in you, because I do it at a time when I stand in
need

need of your assistance; but I know likewise, that I should have lost your esteem, if I had acquainted you with all I am now going to tell you, without having been forced to it by absolute necessity: I have dropped the letter I spoke of last night; it is of the greatest consequence to me, that nobody should know it is addressed to me; it has been seen by abundance of people, who were at the tennis-court yesterday when I dropped it; you was there too, and the favour I have to ask you, is, to say it was you who lost it.---Sure you think, replied the duke de Nemours smiling, that I have no mistress, by making such a proposal, and that I have no quarrels or inconveniences to apprehend by leaving it to be believed that I receive such letters.---I beg you, said the viscount, to hear me seriously; if you have a mistress, as I doubt not you have, though I do not know who she is, it will be easy for you to justify yourself; and I will put you into an infallible way of doing it. As for you, though you should fail in justifying yourself, it can cost you nothing but a short falling out; but for my part, this accident affects me in a very different manner; I shall dishonour a person who has passionately loved me, and is one of the most deserving women in the world; on the other side, I shall draw upon myself an implacable hatred that will ruin my fortune, and perhaps proceed somewhat further.---I do not comprehend what you say, replied the duke de Nemours; but I begin to see that the reports we have had of your interest in a great princess are not wholly without ground.---They are not, replied the viscount; but I would to God they were: you would not see me in the perplexity I am in; but I must relate the whole affair to you, to convince you how much I have to fear.

Ever since I came to court, the queen has treated me with a great deal of favour and distinction, and I had grounds to believe that she was very kindly disposed towards me: there was nothing, however, particular in all this, and I never presumed to entertain any thoughts
of

of her but what were full of respect; so far from it, that I was deeply in love with madam de Themines; any one that sees her may easily judge, 'tis very possible for one to be greatly in love with her, when one is beloved by her; and so I was. About two years ago, the court being at Fontainebleau, I was two or three times in conversation with the queen, at hours when there were very few people in her apartment: It appeared to me, that my turn of wit was agreeable to her, and I observed she always approved what I said. One day, among others, she fell into a discourse concerning confidence. I said there was nobody in whom I entirely confided; that I found people always repented of having done so; and that I knew a great many things of which I had never spoke. The queen told me, she esteemed me the more for it; that she had not found in France any one that could keep a secret, and that this was what had embarrassed her more than any thing else, because it had deprived her of the pleasure of having a confidant; that nothing was so necessary in life as to have somebody one could open one's mind to with safety, especially for people of her rank. Afterwards she frequently resumed the same discourse, and acquainted me with very particular circumstances; at last, I imagined she was desirous to learn my secrets, and to entrust me with her own; this thought engaged me strictly to her. I was so pleased with this distinction, that I made my court to her with greater assiduity than usual. One evening the king and the ladies of the court rode out to take the air in the forest, but the queen being a little indisposed did not go; I staid to wait upon her, and she walked down to the pond-side, and dismissed her gentlemen-ushers, that she might be more at liberty. After she had taken a few turns, she came up to me, and bid me follow her; I would speak with you, says she, and by what I shall say, you will see I am your friend. She stopped here, and looking earnestly at me, You are in love; continued she; and because, perhaps, you

have made nobody your confidant, you think that your love is not known ; but it is known, and even by persons who are interested in it : you are observed, the place where you see your mistress is discovered, and there is a design to surprize you ; I don't know who she is, nor do I ask you to tell me ; I would only secure you from the misfortunes into which you may fall. See, I beseech you, what a snare the queen laid for me, and how difficult it was for me not to fall into it ; she had a mind to know if I was in love ; and as she did not ask me who I was in love with, but let me see her intention was only to serve me, I had no suspicion that she spoke either out of curiosity or by design.

Nevertheless, contrary to all probability, I saw into the bottom of the matter ; I was in love with madam de Themines ; but though she loved me again, I was not happy enough to have private places to see her in without danger of being discovered there ; and so I was satisfied she could not be the person the queen meant ; I knew also, that I had an intrigue with another woman, less handsome and less reserved than madam de Themines, and that it was not impossible but the place where I saw her might be discovered ; but as this was a business I little cared for, it was easy for me to guard against all sorts of danger by forbearing to see her. I resolved, therefore, to acknowledge nothing of it to the queen, but to assure her, on the contrary, that I had a long time laid aside the desire of gaining women's affections, even where I might hope for success, because I found them all, in some measure, unworthy of engaging the heart of an honourable man, and that it must be something very much above them which could touch me.---You do not answer me ingenuously, replied the queen ; I am satisfied of the contrary ; the free manner in which I speak to you, ought to oblige you to conceal nothing from me ; I would have you, continued she, be of the number of my friends ; but I would not, after having admitted you into that rank, be ignorant of your engagements ; consider, whether you think my

friendship will be too dear at the price of making me your confidante; I give you two days to think on it; but, then, consider well of the answer you shall make me; and remember, that if ever I find hereafter you have deceived me, I shall never forgive you as long as I live.

Having said this, the queen left me without waiting for my answer. You may imagine how full my thoughts were of what she had said to me; the two days she had given me to consider of it I did not think too long a time to come to a resolution; I found she had a mind to know if I was in love, and that her desire was I should not be so; I foresaw the consequences of what I was going to do; my vanity was flattered with the thought of having a particular interest with the queen, and a queen whose person is still extremely amiable; on the other hand, I was in love with madam de Themines; and though I had committed a petty treason against her by my engagement with the other woman I told you of, I could not find in my heart to break with her; I foresaw also the danger I should expose myself to, if I deceived the queen, and how hard it would be to do it: nevertheless I could not resolve to refuse what Fortune offered me, and was willing to run the hazard of any thing my ill-conduct might draw upon me; I broke with her with whom I kept a correspondence that might be discovered, and was in hopes of concealing that I had with madam de Themines.

At the two days end, as I entered the room where the queen was with all the ladies about her, she said aloud to me, and with a grave air that was surprising enough, Have you thought of the business I charged you with, and do you know the truth of it?—Yes, madam, answered I, and it is as I told your majesty. —Come in the evening, when I am writing, replied she, and you shall have further orders.—I made a respectful bow without answering any thing, and did not fail to attend at the hour she had appointed me. I found her in the gallery, with her secretary and one of her

her women. As soon as she saw me she came to me, and took me to the other end of the gallery; Well, says she, after having considered thoroughly of this matter, have you nothing to say to me? and as to my manner of treating you, does not it deserve that you should deal sincerely with me?---It is, madam, answered I, because I deal sincerely, that I have nothing more to say; and I swear to your majesty, with all the respect I owe you, that I have no engagement with any woman of the court.---I will believe it, replied the queen, because I wish it; and I wish it, because I desire to have you entirely mine, and because it would be impossible for me to be satisfied with your friendship, if you were in love; one cannot confide in those who are; one cannot be secure of their secrecy; they are too much divided, and their mistresses have always the first place in their thoughts, which does not suit at all with the manner in which I would have you live with me: remember then, it is upon your giving me your word that you have no engagement, that I chuse you for my confidant; remember, I insist on having you entirely to myself, and that you shall have no friend of either sex but such as I shall approve, and that you abandon every care but that of pleasing me; I'll not desire you to neglect any opportunity for advancing your fortune; I'll conduct your interests with more application than you can yourself; and whatever I do for you, I shall think myself more than recompensed, if you answer my expectations; I make choice of you, to open my heart's griefs to you, and to have your assistance in softening them; you may imagine they are not small: I bear, in appearance without much concern, the king's engagement with the duchess of Valentinois, but it is insupportable to me; she governs the king, she imposes upon him; she slights me, all my people are at her beck. The queen, my daughter-in-law, proud of her beauty, and the authority of her uncles, pays me no respect: The constable Montmorency is master of the king and

E 3. kingdom;

kingdom ; he hates me, and has given proofs of his hatred, which I shall never forget. The mareschal de St. André is a bold young favourite, who uses me no better than the others. The detail of my misfortunes would move your pity ; hitherto I have not dared to confide in any body ; I confide in you ; take care that I never repent it, and be my only consolation. The queen blushed when she had ended this discourse, and I was so truly touched with the goodness she had expressed to me, that I was going to throw myself at her feet : from that day she has placed an entire confidence in me ; she has done nothing without advising with me ; and the intimacy and union between us still subsist.

P A R T III.

IN the mean time, however busy and full I was of my new engagement with the queen, I still kept fair with madam de Themines, by a natural inclination which it was not in my power to conquer ; I thought she cooled in her love to me ; and whereas, had I been prudent, I should have made use of the change I observed in her for my cure, my love redoubled upon it, and I managed so ill, that the queen got some knowledge of this intrigue. Jealousy is natural to persons of her nation, and perhaps she had a greater affection for me than she even imagined herself ; at least, the report of my being in love gave her so much uneasiness, that I thought myself entirely ruined with her ; however, I came into favour again by virtue of submissions, false oaths, and assiduity ; but I should not have been able to have deceived her long, had not madam de Themines's change disengaged me from her against my will. She convinced me she no longer loved me ; and I

was

was so thoroughly satisfied of it, that I was obliged to give her no further uneasiness, but to let her be quiet. Some time after she wrote me this letter which I have lost; I learned from it, she had heard of the correspondence I had with the other woman I told you of, and that that was the reason of her change. As I had then nothing further left to divide me, the queen was well enough satisfied with me; but the sentiments I have for her not being of a nature to render me incapable of other engagements, and love not being a thing that depends on our will, I fell in love with madam de Martigues, of whom I was formerly a great admirer while she was with Villemontais, maid of honour to the queen-dauphin. I have reason to believe she does not hate me; the discretion I observe towards her, and which she does not wholly know the reasons of, is very agreeable to her; the queen has not the least suspicion on her account; but she has another jealousy which is not less troublesome: as madam de Martigues is constantly with the queen-dauphin, I go there much oftener than usual; the queen imagines that it is this princess I am in love with; the queen-dauphin's rank, which is equal to her own, and the superiority of her youth and beauty, create a jealousy that rises even to fury, and fills her with a hatred against her daughter-in-law that cannot be concealed. The cardinal of Lorraine, who, I believe, has been long aspiring to the queen's favour, and would be glad to fill the place I possess, is, under pretence of reconciling the two queens, become master of the differences between them; I doubt not but he has discovered the true cause of the queen's anger, and I believe he does me all manner of ill offices; without letting her see that he designs it. This is the condition my affairs are in at present; judge what effect may be produced by the letter which I have lost, and which I unfortunately put in my pocket, with design to restore it to madam de Themines: if the queen sees this letter, she will know I have deceived her; and that almost at the very same

time that I deceived her for madam de Themines, I deceived madam de Themines for another; judge what an idea this will give her of me, and whether she will ever trust me again. If she does not see the letter, what shall I say to her? She knows it has been given to the queen-dauphin; she will think Chatelart knew that queen's hand, and that the letter is from her; she will fancy the person of whom the letter expresses a jealousy, is perhaps herself; in short, there is nothing which she may not think, and there is nothing which I ought not to fear from her thoughts: add to this, that I am desperately in love with madam de Martigues, and that the queen-dauphin will certainly shew her this letter, which she will conclude to have been lately writ. Thus shall I be equally embroiled, both with the person I love most, and with the person I have most cause to fear. Judge, after this, if I have not reason to conjure you to say the letter is yours, and to beg of you to get it out of the queen-dauphin's hands.

I am very well satisfied, answered the duke de Nemours, that one cannot be in a greater embarrassment than that you are in, and it must be confessed you deserve it. I have been accused of being inconstant in my amours, and of having had several intrigues at the same time; but you out-go me so far, that I should not so much as have dared to imagine what you have undertaken; could you pretend to keep madam de Themines, and be at the same time engaged with the queen? Did you hope to have an engagement with the queen, and be able to deceive her? She is both an Italian and a queen, and by consequence full of jealousy, suspicion, and pride. As soon as your good fortune, rather than your good conduct, had set you at liberty from an engagement you were entangled in, you involved yourself in new ones; and you fancied, that in the midst of the court you could be in love with madam de Martigues without the queen's perceiving it. You could not have been too careful to take from her the shame of having
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made the first advances ; she has a violent passion for you ; you have more discretion than to tell it me, and I than to ask you to tell it ; it is certain she is jealous of you, and has truth on her side.---And does it belong to you, interrupted the viscount, to load me with reprimands, and ought not your own experience to make you indulgent to my faults ? However, I grant I am to blame ; but think, I conjure you, how to draw me out of this difficulty ; I think you must go to the queen-dauphin as soon as she is awake, and ask her for the letter, as if you had lost it.---I have told you already, replied the duke de Nemours, that what you propose is somewhat extraordinary, and that there are difficulties in it which may affect my own particular interest ; but besides, if this letter has been seen to drop out of your pocket, I should think it would be hard to persuade people that it dropt out of mine.---I thought I had told you, replied the viscount, that the queen-dauphin had been informed that you dropped it.---How, said the duke de Nemours hastily, apprehending the ill consequence this mistake might be of to him with madam de Cleves, has the queen-dauphin been told I dropped the letter ? ---Yes, replied the viscount, she has been told so ; and what occasioned the mistake was, that there were several gentlemen of the two queens in a room belonging to the tennis-court, where our cloaths were put up, when your servants and mine went together to fetch them ; then it was the letter fell out of the pocket ; those gentlemen took it up, and read it aloud ; some believed it belonged to you, and others to me ; Chateaufort, who took it, and to whom I have just sent for it, says, he gave it to the queen-dauphin as a letter of yours ; and those who have spoken of it to the queen, have unfortunately told her it was mine ; so that you may easily do what I desire of you, and free me from this perplexity.

The duke de Nemours had always had a great friendship for the viscount de Chartres, and the relation he

bore to madam de Cleves still made him more dear to him ; nevertheless, he could not prevail with himself to run the risk of her having heard of this letter, as of a thing in which he was concerned ; he fell into a deep musing, and the viscount guessed pretty near what was the subject of his meditations. I plainly see, said he, that you are afraid of embroiling yourself with your mistress ; and I should almost fancy the queen-dauphin was she, if the little jealousy you seem to have of monsieur d'Anville did not take me off from that thought ; but be that as it will, it is not reasonable you should sacrifice your repose to mine ; and I will put you in a way of convincing her you love, that this letter is directed to me, and not to you : here is a billet from madam d'Amboise, who is a friend of madam de Themines, and was her confidante in the amour between her and me ; in this she desires me to send her madam de Themines's letter, which I have lost ; my name is on the superscription, and the contents of the billet prove, without question, that the letter she desires is the same with that which has been found ; I will leave this billet in your hands, and agree that you may shew it to your mistress in your justification ; I conjure you not to lose a moment, but to go this morning to the queen-dauphin.

The duke de Nemours promised the viscount he would, and took madam d'Amboise's billet ; nevertheless, his design was not to see the queen-dauphin ; he thought more pressing business required his care ; he made no question, but she had already spoke of the letter to madam de Cleves, and could not bear that a person he loved so desperately, should have ground to believe he had engagements with any other.

He went to the princess of Cleves as soon as he thought she might be awake ; and ordered her to be told, that, if he had not business of the last consequence, he would not have desired the honour to see her at so extraordinary an hour. Madam de Cleves was in bed,
and

and her mind was tost to and fro by a thousand melancholy thoughts that she had had during the night; she was extremely surprised to hear the duke de Nemours asked for her; the anxiety she was in made her presently answer, that she was ill, and could not speak with him.

The duke was not at all shocked at this refusal; he thought it presaged him no ill, that she expressed a little coldness at a time when she might be touched with jealousy. He went to the prince of Cleves's apartment, and told him he came from that of his lady, and that he was very sorry he could not see her, because he had an affair to communicate to her of great consequence, to the viscount de Chartres; he explained in few words to the prince the importance of this business, and the prince immediately introduced him into his lady's chamber. Had she not been in the dark, she would have found it hard to have concealed the trouble and astonishment she was in to see the duke de Nemours introduced by her husband. Monsieur de Cleves told her the business was about a letter, wherein her assistance was wanting for the interest of the viscount; that she was to consult with monsieur de Nemours what was to be done; and that as for him, he was going to the king, who had just sent for him.

The duke de Nemours had his heart's desire, in being alone with madam de Cleves. I am come to ask you, madam, said he, if the queen-dauphin has not spoke to you of a letter which Chatelart gave her yesterday.---She said something to me of it, replied madam de Cleves; but I do not see what relation this letter has to the interests of my uncle, and I can assure you that he is not named in it.---It is true, madam, replied the duke de Nemours, he is not named in it; but yet it is addressed to him, and it very much imports him that you should get it out of the queen-dauphin's hands.---I cannot comprehend, replied the princess, how it should be of any consequence to him if this letter should be seen, nor what reason there is to re-demand it

in his name.---If you please to be at leisure to hear me, madam, said monsieur de Nemours, I will presently make you acquainted with the true state of the thing; and inform you of matters of so great importance to the viscount, that I would not even have trusted the prince of Cleves with them, had I not stood in need of his assistance to have the honour to see you.---I believe, said madam de Cleves in a very unconcerned manner, that any thing you may give yourself the trouble of telling me, will be to little purpose; you had better go to the queen-dauphin, and plainly tell her, without using these round-about ways, the interest you have in that letter, since she has been told, as well as I, that it belongs to you.

The uneasiness of mind which monsieur de Nemours observed in madam de Cleves gave him the most sensible pleasure he ever knew, and lessened his impatience to justify himself: I do not know, madam, replied he, what the queen-dauphin may have been told; but I am not at all concerned in that letter; it is addressed to the viscount.---I believe so, replied madam de Cleves; but the queen-dauphin has heard to the contrary, and she would not think it very probable that the viscount's letter should fall out of your pocket; you must therefore have some reason, that I do not know of, for concealing the truth of this matter from the queen-dauphin; I advise you to confess it to her.---I have nothing to confess to her; says he, the letter is not directed to me; and if there be any one that I would have satisfied of it, it is not the queen-dauphin; but, madam, since the viscount's interest is nearly concerned in this, be pleased to let me acquaint you with some matters that are worthy of your curiosity. Madam de Cleves by her silence shewed her readiness to hear him, and he as succinctly as possible related to her all he had just heard from the viscount. Though the circumstances were naturally surprising, and proper to create attention, yet madam de Cleves heard them with such cold-

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ness, that she seemed either not to believe them true, or to think them indifferent to her. She continued in this temper until the duke de Nemours spoke of madam d'Amboise's billet, which was directed to the viscount, and was a proof of all he had been saying; as madam de Cleves knew that this lady was a friend of madam de Themines, she found some probability in what the duke de Nemours had said, which made her think, that the letter perhaps was not addressed to him; this thought suddenly, and in spite of herself, drew her out of the coldness and indifferency she had until then been in. The duke having read the billet, which fully justified him, presented it to her to read, and told her she might possibly know the hand. She could not forbear taking it, and examining the superscription, to see if it was addressed to the viscount de Chartres; and reading it all over, that she might the better judge, if the letter which was re-demanded was the same with that she had in her hand. The duke de Nemours added whatever he thought proper to persuade her of it; and as one is easily persuaded of the truth of what one wishes, he soon convinced madam de Cleves that he had no concern in the letter.

She began now to reason with him concerning the embarrassment and danger the viscount was in, to blame his ill conduct, and to think of means to help him. She was astonished at the queen's proceedings, and confessed to the duke that she had the letter; in short, she no sooner believed him innocent, but she discoursed with him with greater ease and freedom concerning what she would scarce before vouchsafe to hear. They agreed that the letter should not be restored to the queen-dauphin, for fear she should shew it to madam de Martigues, who knew madam de Themines's hand, and would easily guess, by the interest she had in the viscount, that it was addressed to him: they agreed also, that they ought not to entrust the queen-dauphin with all that concerned the queen her mother-in-law.

Madam de Cleves, under pretence of serving her uncle, was pleased to be the duke de Nemours's confidante in the secrets he had imparted to her.

The duke would not have confined his discourse to the viscount's concerns; but from the liberty he had of free conversation with her, would have assumed a boldness he had never yet done, had not a message been brought in to madam de Cleves, that the queen-dauphin had sent for her. The duke was forced to withdraw; he went to the viscount to inform him, that after he had left him, he thought it proper to apply to madam de Cleves, his niece, than to go directly to the queen-dauphin; he did not want reasons to make him approve what he had done, and to give him hopes of good success.

In the mean time madam de Cleves dressed herself in all haste to go to the queen-dauphin; she was no sooner entered her chamber, but she called her to her, and whispered her, I have been waiting for you these two hours, and was never so perplexed about disguising a truth as I have been this morning: the queen has heard of the letter I gave you yesterday, and believes it was the viscount de Chartres that dropped it; you know she has some interest to be satisfied in it; she has been in search for the letter, and has caused Chate-lart to be asked for it; who said he had given it to me; they have been to ask me for it, under pretence it was an ingenious letter which the queen had a curiosity to see. I durst not say that you had it, for fear she should think I had given it you on your uncle the viscount's account, and that there was a correspondence between him and me. I was already satisfied, that his seeing me so often gave her uneasiness; so that I said the letter was in the cloaths I had on yesterday, and that those who had them in keeping were gone abroad: Give me the letter immediately; added she, that I may send it her, and that I may read it before I send it, to see if I know the hand.

Madam

Madam de Cleves was harder put to it than she expected ; I do not know, madam, what you will do, answered she ; for monsieur de Cleves, to whom I gave it to read, returned it to the duke of Nemours, who came early this morning to beg him to get it of you. Monsieur de Cleves had the imprudence to tell him he had it, and the weakness to yield to the entreaties the duke de Nemours made, that he would restore it him. ---You throw me into the greatest embarrassment I can possibly be in, replied the queen-dauphin ; and you have given this letter to the duke de Nemours. Since it was I that gave it you, you ought not to have restored it without my leave ; what would you have me say to the queen, and what can she imagine ? She will think, and not without reason, that this letter concerns myself, and that there is something between the viscount and me ; she will never be persuaded the letter belonged to the duke de Nemours.---I am very much concerned, replied madam de Cleves, for the misfortune I have occasioned, and I believe the difficulty I have brought you into is very great ; but it was monsieur de Cleves's fault, and not mine.---You are in fault, replied the queen-dauphin, for having given him the letter ; and I believe you are the only woman in the world that acquaints her husband with all she knows.---I acknowledge myself in fault, madam, replied the princess of Cleves ; but let us rather think of preventing the consequences of what I have done, than insist on the fault itself.---Do you remember, pretty pear, what the letter contains ? says the queen-dauphin. ---Yes, madam, I do, replied she, for I have read it over more than once.---If so, said the queen-dauphin, you must immediately get it written out in an unknown hand, and I will send it to the queen ; she will not shew it those who have seen it already ; and though she should, I will stand in it, that it is the same Chatelart gave me ; and he will not dare to say otherwise.

Madam

Madam de Cleves approved of this expedient ; and the more, because it gave her an opportunity of sending for the duke de Nemours, to have the letter itself again, in order to have it copied word for word, imitating as near as may be the hand it was written in ; and she thought this would effectually deceive the queen. As soon as she was got home, she informed her husband of what had passed between her and the queen-dauphin, and begged him to send for the duke de Nemours. The duke was sent for, and came immediately ; madam de Cleves told him all she had told her husband, and asked for the letter ; but the duke answered, that he had already returned it to the viscount de Chartres ; who was so overjoyed upon having it again, and being freed from the danger he was in, that he sent it immediately to madam de Themines's friend. Madam de Cleves was in a new embarrassment on this occasion : in short, after having consulted together, they resolved to form the letter by memory ; and, in order to go about it, they locked themselves up, and left orders that nobody should be admitted, and that all the duke de Nemours's attendants should be sent away. Such an appearance of secret confidence was no small charm to monsieur de Nemours, and even to madam de Cleves ; her husband's presence, and the interests of her uncle the viscount de Chartres, were considerations which in great measure removed her scruples, and made this opportunity of seeing and being with the duke de Nemours so agreeable to her, that she never before experienced a joy so pure and free from alloy ; this threw her into a freedom and gaiety of spirit, which the duke had never observed in her till now, and which made him still more passionately in love with her : As he had never known such agreeable moments, his vivacity was much heightened ; and whenever madam de Cleves was beginning to recollect and write the letter, instead of assisting her seriously, did nothing but interrupt her with wit and pleasantry. Madam de Cleves was as gay as he ; so that they had
been

been locked up a considerable time, and two messages had come from the queen-dauphin to hasten madam de Cleves, before they had half finished the letter.

The duke de Nemours was glad to prolong the time that was so agreeable to him, and neglected the concerns of his friend; madam de Cleves was not at all tired, and neglected also the concerns of her uncle: at last, with much ado, about four o'clock the letter was finished, and was so ill done, and the copy so unlike the original, as to the hand-writing, that the queen must have taken very little care to come at the truth of the matter, if she had been imposed on by so ill a counterfeit. Accordingly she was not deceived; and however industrious they were to persuade her that this letter was addressed to the duke de Nemours, she remained satisfied not only that it was addressed to the viscount de Chartres, but that the queen-dauphin was concerned in it, and that there was a correspondence between them; this heightened her hatred against that princess to such a degree, that she never forgave her, and never ceased persecuting her till she had driven her out of France.

As for the viscount de Chartres, his credit was entirely ruined with her; and whether the cardinal of Lorain had already insinuated himself so far into her esteem as to govern her; or whether the accident of this letter, which made it appear that the viscount had deceived her, enabled her to discover the other tricks he had played her, 'tis certain he could never after entirely reconcile himself to her; their correspondence was broke off, and at length she ruined him by means of the conspiracy of Amboise, in which he was involved.

After the letter was sent to the queen-dauphin, monsieur de Cleves and monsieur de Nemours went away; madam de Cleves continued alone, and being no longer supported by the joy which the presence of what one loves gives one, she seemed like one newly-waked from a dream;

a dream; she beheld, with astonishment, the difference between the condition she was in the night before, and that she was in at this time: she called to mind, how cold and fullen she was to the duke de Nemours while she thought madam de Themines's letter was addressed to him, and how calm and sweet a situation of mind succeeded that uneasiness, as soon as she was satisfied he was not concerned in that letter; when she reflected, that she reproached herself as guilty for having given him the foregoing day only some marks of sensibility, which mere compassion might have produced, and that by her peevish humour this morning she had expressed such a jealousy as was a certain proof of passion, she thought she was not herself; when she reflected further, that the duke de Nemours saw plainly, that she knew he was in love with her, and that, notwithstanding her knowing it, she did not use him the worse for it, even in her husband's presence; but that, on the contrary, she had never behaved so favourably to him; when she considered, she was the cause of monsieur de Cleves's sending for him, and that she had just passed an afternoon in private with him; when she considered all this, she found there was something within her that held intelligence with the duke de Nemours, and that she deceived a husband who least deserved it; and she was ashamed to appear so little worthy of esteem, even in the eyes of her lover; but what she was able to support less than all the rest was, the remembrance of the condition in which she spent the last night, and the griefs she felt from a suspicion that the duke de Nemours was in love with another, and that she was deceived by him.

Never till then was she acquainted with the dreadful inquietudes that flow from jealousy and distrust; she had applied all her cares to prevent herself from falling in love with the duke de Nemours, and had not before had any fear of his being in love with another. Though the suspicions which this letter had given her were effaced, yet they left her sensible of the hazard there was of being
deceived,

deceived, and gave her impressions of distrust and jealousy which she had never felt till that time; she was surpris'd, that she had never yet reflected, how improbable it was, that a man of the duke de Nemours's turn, who had shew'd so much inconstancy towards women, should be capable of a lasting and sincere passion; she thought it next to impossible for her to be convinced of the truth of his love: But though I could be convinced of it, says she, shall I permit it? Shall I make a return? Shall I engage in galantry, be false to monsieur de Cleves, and be false to myself? In a word, shall I go to expose myself to the cruel remorse and deadly griefs that rise from love? I am subdued and vanquish'd by a passion, which hurries me away in spite of myself; all my resolutions are vain; I had the same thoughts yesterday that I have to-day, and I act to-day contrary to what I resolv'd yesterday; I must convey myself out of the sight of the duke de Nemours; I must go into the country, however fantastical my journey appear; and if monsieur de Cleves is obstinately bent to hinder me, or to know my reasons for it, perhaps I shall do him and myself the injury to acquaint him with them. She continued in this resolution, and spent the whole evening at home, without going to the queen-dauphin to enquire what had happened with respect to the counterfeited letter.

When the prince of Cleves returned home, she told him she was resolv'd to go into the country; that she was not very well, and had occasion to take the air. Monsieur de Cleves, to whom she appeared so beautiful that he could not think her indisposition very considerable, at first made a jest of her design, and answered, that she had forgot that the nuptials of the princesses and the tournament were very near, and that she had not too much time to prepare matters so as to appear there as magnificently as other ladies. What her husband said did not make her change her resolution; and she begged he would agree, that while he was at Compiègne

piegne with the king, she might go to Colomiers, a pretty house then building, within a day's journey of Paris. Monsieur de Cleves consented to it; she went thither with a design of not returning so soon, and the king set out for Compiegne, where he was to stay but a few days.

The duke de Nemours was mightily concerned he had not seen madam de Cleves since that afternoon, which he had spent so agreeably with her, and which had encreased his hopes; he was so impatient to see her again, that he could not rest; so that when the king returned to Paris, the duke resolved to go to see his sister the duchess de Mercœur, who was at a country-seat of her's, very near Colomiers; he asked the viscount to go with him, who readily consented to it. The duke de Nemours did this in hopes of visiting Madam de Cleves, in company of the viscount.

Madam de Mercœur received them with a great deal of joy, and thought of nothing but giving them all the pleasures and diversions of the country. One day, as they were hunting a stag, the duke de Nemours lost himself in the forest, and upon enquiring his way was told he was near Colomiers; at that word, without further reflection, or so much as knowing what design he was upon, he galloped on full speed the way that had been shewed him; as he rode along he came by chance to the made-ways and walks, which he judged led to the castle: at the end of these he found an arbour, behind which was a pavilion with two closets, the one opening into a flower-garden, and the other looking into a spacious walk in the park. He entered the pavilion, and would have stopped to observe the beauty of it, if he had not seen in the walk the prince and princess of Cleves, attended with a numerous train of their domestics. As he did not expect to meet monsieur de Cleves there, whom he had left with the king, he thought at first of hiding himself; he entered the closet which looked into the flower-garden, with

with design to go out that way by a door which opened to the forest; but observing madam de Cleves and her husband were sat down in the arbour, and that their attendants staid in the park, and could not come to him without passing by the place where monsieur and madam de Cleves were, he could not deny himself the pleasure of seeing this princess, nor resist the curiosity he had to hear her conversation with a husband, who gave him more jealousy than any of his rivals. He heard monsieur de Cleves say to his wife, But why will you not return to Paris? What can keep you here in the country? You have of late taken a fancy for solitude, at which I am both surpris'd and concerned, because it deprives me of your company: I find, too, you are more melancholy than usual, and I am afraid you have some cause of grief.---I have nothing to trouble my mind, answered she with an air of confusion; but there is such a bustle at court, and such a multitude of people always at your house, that it is impossible but both body and mind should be fatigued, and one cannot but desire repose.---Repose, answered he, is not very proper for one of your age; you are at home, and at court, in such a manner as cannot occasion weariness, and I am rather afraid you desire to live apart from me.---You would do me great wrong to think so, replied she with yet more confusion, but I beg you to leave me here; if you could stay here, and without company, I should be very glad of it; nothing would be more agreeable to me than your conversation in this retirement, provided you would approve not to have about you that infinite number of people, who in a manner never leave you.---Ah! madam, cries monsieur de Cleves, both your looks and words convince me, that you have reasons to desire to be alone which I do not know; I conjure you to tell them me. He urged her a great while to inform him, without being able to bring her to it; and after she had excus'd herself in a manner which still increased her husband's curiosity, she continued in a deep silence, with
her

her eyes cast down; then, taking up the discourse on a sudden, and looking upon him, Force me not, said she, to confess a thing to you which I have not the power to own, though I have often designed it; remember only, that it is not prudent a woman of my years, and mistress of her own conduct, should remain exposed in the midst of a court.---What is it, madam, cried monsieur de Cleves, that you lead me to imagine? I dare not speak it, for fear of offending you. Madam de Cleves making no answer, her silence confirmed her husband in what he thought: You say nothing to me, says he, and that tells me clearly, that I am not mistaken.---Alas! sir, answered she, falling on her knees, I am going to make a confession to you, such as no woman ever yet made to her husband; but the innocence of my intentions, and of my conduct, gives me power to do it; it is true, I have reasons to absent myself from the court, and I would avoid the dangers persons of my age are sometimes liable to; I have never shewn any mark of weakness, and I cannot apprehend I ever shall, if you will permit me to retire from court, since now I have not madam de Chartres to assist me in my conduct; however dangerous a step I am taking, I take it with pleasure, to preserve myself worthy of you; I ask you a thousand pardons, if I have sentiments which displease you, at least, I will never do so by my actions; consider, that to do what I do, requires more friendship and esteem for a husband than ever wife had; direct my conduct, have pity on me, and, if you can, still love me.

Monsieur de Cleves, all the while she spoke, continued leaning his head on his hand, almost beside himself, and never thought of raising her up. When she had done speaking, and he cast his eyes upon her, and saw her on her knees with her face drowned in tears, imimitably beautiful, he was ready to die for grief, and taking her up in his arms, Have you pity on me, madam, says he, for I deserve it, and pardon me, if in the first moments of an affliction so violent as mine, I do
not

not answer as I ought to so generous a proceeding as yours; I think you more worthy of esteem and admiration than any woman that ever was, but I find myself also the most unfortunate of men: you inspired me with passion the first moment I saw you, and that passion has never decayed; not your coldness, nor even enjoyment itself, has been able to extinguish it; it still continues in its first force; and yet it has not been in my power to kindle in your breast any spark of love for me, and now I find you fear you have an inclination for another; and who is he, madam, this happy man that gives you such apprehensions? How long has he charmed you? What has he done to charm you? What method has he taken to get into your heart? When I could not gain your affections myself, it was some comfort to me to think, that no other could; in the mean time, another has effected what I could not; and I have, at once, the jealousy of a husband and a lover. But it is impossible for me to retain that of a husband after such a proceeding on your part, which is too noble and ingenuous not to give me an entire security; it even comforts me as a lover; the sincerity you have expressed, and the confidence you have placed in me, are of infinite value: you have esteem enough for me to believe I shall not abuse the confession you have made to me: you are in the right, madam, I will not abuse it, or love you the less for it; you make me unhappy by the greatest mark of fidelity ever woman gave her husband; but go on, madam, and inform me who he is whom you would avoid.---I beg you not to ask me, replied she; I am resolved not to tell you, nor do I think it prudent to name him.---Fear not, madam, replied monsieur de Cleves; I know the world too well to be ignorant that a woman's having a husband does not hinder people from being in love with her; such lovers may be the objects of one's hatred, but we are not to complain of it; once again, madam, I conjure you to tell me what I so much desire to know.---It is in vain to press me, replied she; I have the

the power to be silent in what I think I ought not to tell; the confession I made to you, was not owing to any weakness, and it required more courage to declare such a truth, than it would have done to conceal it.

The duke de Nemours did not lose a word of this conversation, and what madam de Cleves had said gave him no less jealousy than her husband; he was so desperately in love with her, that he believed all the world was so too; it is true, he had many rivals, yet he fancied them still more, and his thoughts wandered to find out who it was madam de Cleves meant: he had often thought he was not disagreeable to her; but the grounds of his judgment on this occasion appeared so slight, that he could not imagine he had raised in her heart a passion violent enough to oblige her to have recourse to so extraordinary a remedy; he was so transported, that he scarce knew what he saw, and he could not pardon monsieur de Cleves for not having pressed his wife enough to tell him the name of the person she concealed from him.

Monsieur de Cleves, nevertheless, used his utmost endeavours to know it; and having urged her very much on the subject—I think, answered she, that you ought to be satisfied with my sincerity; ask me no more about it, and do not give me cause to repent of what I have done; content yourself with the assurance which I once more give you, that my sentiments have never appeared by any of my actions, and that no address hath been made to me that could give me offence.---Ah! madam, replied monsieur de Cleves on a sudden, I cannot believe it; I remember the confusion you was in when your picture was lost; you have given away, madam, you have given away that picture, which was so dear to me, and which I had so just a right to; you have not been able to conceal your inclinations; you are in love; it is known; your virtue has hitherto saved you from the rest.---Is it possible, cried madam de Cleves, you can imagine there was any reserve or disguise in a confession

cession like mine, which I was no way obliged to? Take my word, I purchase dearly the confidence I desire of you; I conjure you to believe I have not given away my picture; it is true, I saw it taken; but I would not seem to see it, for fear of subjecting myself to hear such things as no one has yet dared to mention to me.---How do you know then that you are loved? said monsieur de Cleves. What mark, what proof of it has been given you?---Spare me the pain, replied she, of repeating to you circumstances which I am ashamed to have observed, and which have convinced me but too much of my own weakness.-----You are in the right, madam, answered he, I am unjust; always refuse me when I ask you such things, and yet do not be angry with me for asking them.

Just then several of the servants, who had staid in the walks, came to acquaint monsieur de Cleves, that a gentleman was arrived from the king, with orders for him to be at Paris that evening. Monsieur de Cleves was obliged to go, and had only time to tell his wife, that he desired her to come to Paris the next day; and that he conjured her to believe, that however afflicted he was, he had a tenderness and esteem for her with which she ought to be satisfied.

When he was gone, and madam de Cleves being alone, considered what she had done, she was so frightened at the thought of it, she could hardly believe it to be true. She found she had deprived herself of the heart and esteem of her husband, and was involved in a labyrinth she should never get out of; she asked herself, why she had ventured on so dangerous a step, and perceived she was engaged in it almost without having designed it; the singularity of such a confession, for which she saw no precedent, made her fully sensible of her danger.

But, on the other hand, when she came to think that this remedy, however violent it was, was the only effectual one she could make use of against monsieur de Nemours, she found she had no cause to repent, or to believe

believe she had ventured too far; she passed the whole night full of doubts, anxiety and fear; but at last her spirits grew calm again; she even felt a pleasure arise in her mind, from a sense of having given such a proof of fidelity to a husband who deserved it so well, who had so great a friendship and esteem for her, and had so lately manifested it by the manner in which he received the confession she had made him.

In the mean time monsieur de Nemours was gone away from the place in which he had overheard a conversation which so sensibly affected him, and was got deep into the forest; what madam de Cleves said of her picture had revived him, since it was certain from thence that he was the person she had an inclination for: at first he gave a loose to joy; but his raptures were at an end as soon as he began to reflect, that the same thing that convinced him he had touched the heart of madam de Cleves, ought to convince him also that he should never receive any marks of it, and that it would be impossible to engage a lady who had recourse to so extraordinary a remedy; and yet he could not but be sensibly pleased to have reduced her to that extremity; he thought it glorious for him to have gained the affections of a woman so different from the rest of her sex; in a word, he thought himself very happy, and very unhappy at the same time. He was benighted in the forest, and was very much put to it to find his way again to his sister's, the duchess of Mercœur; he arrived there at break of day, and was extremely at a loss what account to give of his absence; but he made out the matter as well as he could, and returned that very day to Paris with the viscount.

The duke was so taken up with his passion, and so surprized at the conversation he had heard, that he fell into an indiscretion very common, which is, to speak one's own particular sentiments in general terms, and to relate one's proper adventures under borrowed names. As they were travelling, he began to talk of love, and
exag-

exaggerated the pleasure of being in love with a person that deserved it; he spoke of the fantastical effects of this passion; and at last, not being able to contain within himself the admiration he was in at the action of madam de Cleves, he related it to the viscount without naming the person, or owning he had any share in it; but he told it with so much warmth and surprise, that the viscount easily suspected the story concerned himself. The viscount urged him very much to confess it, and told him he had known a great while that he was violently in love, and that it was unjust in him to shew a distrust of a man, who had committed to him a secret on which his life depended. The duke de Nemours was too much in love to own it, and had always concealed it from the viscount, though he valued him the most of any man at court; he answered, That one of his friends had told him this adventure, and made him promise not to speak of it; and he also conjured the viscount to keep the secret: the viscount assured him he would say nothing of it; but notwithstanding, monsieur de Nemours repented that he had told him so much.

In the mean time monsieur de Cleves was gone to the king, with a heart full of affliction. Never had husband so violent a passion for his wife, or so great an esteem; what she had told him did not take away his esteem of her, but made it of a different nature from that he had had before; what chiefly employ'd his thoughts, was a desire to guess who it was that had found out the secret to win her heart. The duke de Nemours was the first person he thought of on this occasion, as being the handsomest man at court; and the chevalier de Guise and the mareschal de St. André occurred next, as two persons who had made it their endeavour to get her love, and who were still very assiduous in courting her; so that he was fully persuaded it must be one of the three. He arrived at the Louvre; and the king carried him into his closet to inform him, he had made choice of him to conduct Madame into Spain; and that he be-

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lieved nobody could acquit himself better of that charge, nor that any lady would do France greater honour than madam de Cleves. Monsieur de Cleves received the honour the king had done him by this choice with the respect he ought, and he considered it also as what would take his wife from court, without leaving room to suspect any change in her conduct; but the embarrassment he was under required a speedier remedy than that journey, which was to be deferred a great while, could afford; he immediately writ to madam de Cleves to acquaint her with what the king had told him; and gave her to understand, he absolutely expected she should return to Paris. She returned according to his orders, and when they met, they found one another overwhelmed with melancholy.

Monsieur de Cleves spoke to her, as a man of the greatest honour in the world, and the best deserving the confidence she had reposed in him: I am not alarmed as to your conduct, said he, you have more strength and virtue than you imagine; I am not alarmed with fears of what may happen hereafter; what troubles me is, that I see you have those sentiments for another which you want for me.---I do not know what to answer you, said she, I die with shame when I speak of this subject; spare me, I conjure you, such cruel conversations; regulate my conduct, and never let me see any body; this is all I desire of you; but take it not ill of me, if I speak no more of a thing which makes me appear so little worthy of you, and which I think so unbecoming me.---You are in the right, madam, replied he, I abuse your goodness and your confidence in me; but have some compassion also on the condition you have brought me to; and think, that whatever you have told me, you conceal from me a name, which creates in me a curiosity I cannot live without satisfying; and yet I ask you not to satisfy it; I cannot, however, forbear telling you, that I believe the man I am to envy is the marshal de St. André, the duke de Nemours,

or

or the chevalier de Guise.---I shall make you no answer, says she blushing, nor give you any ground, from what I say, either to lessen or strengthen your suspicions; but if you endeavour to inform yourself by observing me, you will throw me into a confusion all the world will take notice of; for God's sake, continued she, allow me, under pretence of an indisposition, to see nobody.---No, madam, said he, it will quickly be discovered to be a feigned business; and besides, I am unwilling to trust you to any thing but yourself; my heart tells me this is the best way I can take, and my reason tells me so also; considering the temper of mind you are in, I cannot put a greater restraint upon you, than by leaving you to your liberty.

Monsieur de Cleves was not mistaken; the confidence he shewed he had in his wife, fortified her the more against monsieur de Nemours, and made her take more severe resolutions than any restraint could have brought her to. She went to wait on the queen-dauphin at the Louvre, as she used to do; but avoided the presence and eyes of monsieur de Nemours with so much care, that she deprived him of almost all the joy he had in thinking she loved him; he saw nothing in her actions but what seemed to shew the contrary; he scarcely knew if what he had heard was not a dream, so very improbable it seemed to him. The only thing which assured him that he was not mistaken, was madam de Cleves's extreme melancholy, which appeared, whatever pains she took to hide it; and perhaps kind words and looks would not have increased the duke of Nemours's love so much as this severe conduct did.

One evening, as monsieur and madam de Cleves were at the queen's apartment, it was said there was a report that the king would name another great lord to wait on Madame into Spain. Monsieur de Cleves had his eye fixed on his wife, when it was further said, the chevalier de Guise, or the mareschal de St. André, was the person; he observed she was not at all moved

at either of those names, nor the discourse of their going along with her; this made him believe, it was not either of them whose presence she feared: in order to clear up his suspicions, he went into the queen's closet, where the king then was, and after having staid there some time, came back to his wife, and whispered her, that he had just heard the duke de Nemours was the person designed to go along with them to Spain.

The name of the duke de Nemours, and the thought of being exposed to see him every day, during a very long journey, in her husband's presence, so affected madam de Cleves, that she could not conceal her trouble: and being willing to give other reasons for it, No choice, says she, could have been made more disagreeable for you; he will share all honours with you, and I think you ought to endeavour to get some other chosen. ---It is not honour, madam, reply'd monsieur de Cleves, that makes you apprehensive of the duke de Nemours's going with me, the uneasiness you are in proceeds from another cause; and from this uneasiness of yours I learn, that which I should have discovered in another woman by the joy she would have expressed on such an occasion; but be not afraid; what I have told you is not true, it was an invention of mine to assure myself of a thing which I already believed but too much. Having said this, he went out, being unwilling to increase, by his presence, the concern he saw his wife in.

The duke de Nemours came in that instant, and presently observed madam de Cleves's condition; he came up to her, and told her softly, he had that respect for her, he durst not ask what it was made her more pensive than usual. The voice of the duke de Nemours brought her to herself again, and looking at him, without having heard what he had said to her, full of her own thoughts, and afraid lest her husband should see him with her, For God's sake, says she, leave me to myself in quiet.---Alas! madam, answered he, I disturb you too little; what is it you can complain of? I dare not speak
to

to you, I dare not look upon you, I tremble whenever I approach you. How have I drawn upon myself what you have said to me? and why do you shew me, that I am in part the cause of the trouble I see you in? Madam de Cleves was very sorry to have given the duke an opportunity of explaining himself more clearly than ever he had done before; she left him without making any answer, and went home with her mind more agitated than ever. Her husband perceived her concern was increased, and that she was afraid he would speak to her of what had past, and followed her into her closet: Do not shun me, madam, says he, I will say nothing to you that shall displease you; I ask pardon for the surprise I gave you a while ago; I am sufficiently punished by what I have learnt from it; the duke de Nemours was of all men he whom I most feared; I see the danger you are in; command yourself for your own sake, and, if it is possible, for mine; I do not ask this of you as a husband, but as a man whose happiness wholly depends on you, and who loves you more violently and more tenderly than he whom your heart prefers to me. Monsieur de Cleves was melted upon speaking these words, and could scarce make an end of them; his wife was so moved, she burst into tears, and embraced him with a tenderness and sorrow that put him into a condition not very different from her own. They continued silent a while, and parted without having the power to speak to one another.

All things were ready for the marriage of Madame, and the duke of Alva was arrived to espouse her; he was received with all the ceremony and magnificence that could be display'd on such an occasion; the king sent to meet him the prince of Conde, the cardinals of Lorain and Guise, the dukes of Lorain and Ferrara, d'Aumale, de Bouillon, de Guise, and de Nemours; they had a great number of gentlemen, and a great many pages in livery; the king himself, attended with

two hundred gentlemen, and the constable at their head, received the duke of Alva at the first gate of the Louvre; the duke would have kneeled down, but the king refused it, and made him walk by his side to the queen's apartment, and to Madame's, to whom the duke of Alva had brought a magnificent present from his master; he went thence to the apartment of madam Margaret, the king's sister, to compliment her on the part of the duke of Savoy, and to assure her he would arrive in a few days. There were great assemblies at the Louvre, to shew the duke of Alva, and the prince of Orange who accompanied him, the beauties of the court.

Madam de Cleves could not dispense with going to these assemblies, however desirous she was to be absent, for fear of disobliging her husband, who absolutely commanded her to be there; and, what yet more induced her to it, was the absence of the duke de Nemours; he was gone to meet the duke of Savoy; and after the arrival of that prince, he was obliged to be almost always with him, to assist him in every thing relating to the ceremonies of the nuptials; for this reason madam de Cleves did not meet him so often as she used to do, which gave her some sort of ease.

The viscount de Chartres had not forgot the conversation he had had with the duke de Nemours: it still ran in his mind, that the adventure the duke had related to him was his own; and he observed him so carefully, that it is probable he would have unravelled the business, if the arrival of the duke of Alva and of the duke of Savoy had not made such an alteration in the court, and filled it with so much business, as left no opportunities for a discovery of that nature; the desire he had to get some information about it, or rather the natural disposition one has to relate all one knows to those one loves, made him acquaint madam de Martigues with the extraordinary action of that person, who had confessed to her husband the passion she had for another. He assured her, the duke de Nemours

was

was the man who had inspired so violent a love, and begged her assistance in observing him. Madam de Martignies was glad to hear what the viscount told her; and the curiosity she had always observed in the queen-dauphin for what concerned the duke de Nemours, made her yet more desirous to search into the bottom of the affair.

A few days before that which was fixed for the ceremony of the marriage, the queen-dauphin entertained at supper the king her father-in-law, and the duchess of Valentinois. Madam de Cleves, who had been busy in dressing herself, went to the Louvre later than ordinary; as she was going, she met a gentleman, that was coming from the queen-dauphin to fetch her; as soon as she entered the room, that princess, who was sitting upon her bed, told her aloud, that she had expected her with great impatience.---I believe, madam, answered she, that I am not obliged to you for it, and that your impatience was caused by something else, and not your desire to see me.---You are in the right, answered the queen-dauphin; but, nevertheless, you are obliged to me; for I will tell you an adventure, which I am sure you will be glad to know.

Madam de Cleves kneeled at her bed-side, and, very luckily for her, with her face from the light: You know, said the queen, how desirous we have been to find out what had caused so great a change in the duke of Nemours; I believe I know it, and it is what will surprise you; he is desperately in love with, and as much beloved by, one of the finest ladies of the court. It is easy to imagine the grief madam de Cleves felt upon hearing these words, which she could not apply to herself, since she thought nobody knew any thing of her passion for the duke; I see nothing extraordinary in that, replied she, considering how young and handsome a man the duke de Nemours is.---No, replied the queen-dauphin, there is nothing extraordinary in it; but what will surprise you is, that this lady, who is in
love

love with the duke de Nemours, has never given him any mark of it, and that the fear she was in lest she should not always be mistress of her passion, has made her confess it to her husband, that he may take her away from court; and it is the duke de Nemours himself who has related what I tell you.

If madam de Cleves was grieved at first through the thought that she had no concern in this adventure, the queen-dauphin's last words threw her into an agony, by making it certain she had too much in it; she could not answer, but continued leaning her head on the bed. Meanwhile the queen went on, and was so intent on what she was saying, that she took no notice of her embarrassment. When madam de Cleves was a little come to herself, This story, madam, says she, does not seem very probable to me, and I should be glad to know who told it you.---It was madam de Martigues, replied the queen-dauphin, and she heard it from the viscount de Chartres; you know the viscount is in love with her; he entrusted this matter to her as a secret, and he was told it by the duke de Nemours himself; it is true, the duke did not tell the lady's name, nor acknowledge that he was the person she was in love with, but the viscount makes no manner of question of it. When the queen-dauphin had done speaking, somebody came up to the bed; madam de Cleves was so placed that she could not see who it was, but she was presently convinced, when the queen-dauphin cried out, with an air of gaiety and surprize, Here he is himself, I will ask him what there is in it. Madam de Cleves knew very well it was the duke de Nemours, without turning herself, as it really was; upon which she went up hastily to the queen-dauphin, and told her softly, that she ought to be cautious of speaking to him of this adventure, which he had entrusted to the viscount de Chartres as a secret, and that it was a thing which might create a quarrel between them.---You are too wise, said the queen-dauphin smiling.

smiling, and turned to the duke de Nemours : he was dressed for the evening-assembly, and taking up the discourse with that grace which was natural to him, I believe, madam, says he, I may venture to think you were speaking of me as I came in, that you had a design to ask me something, and that madam de Cleves is against it.---It is true, replied the queen-dauphin, but I shall not be so complaisant to her on this occasion as I was used to be ; I would know of you, whether a story I have been told is true, and whether you are not the person who is in love with, and beloved by a lady of the court, who endeavours to conceal her passion from you, and has confessed it to her husband ?

The concern and confusion madam de Cleves was in was above all that can be imagined ; and if death itself could have drawn her out of this condition, she would have gladly embraced it ; but the duke de Nemours was yet more embarrassed, if possible : the discourse of the queen-dauphin, by whom he had reason to believe he was not hated, in the presence of madam de Cleves, who was confided in by her more than any body of the court, and who confided more in her, threw him into such confusion and extravagance of thought, that it was impossible for him to be master of his countenance : the concern he saw madam de Cleves in through his fault, and the thought of having given her just cause to hate him, so shocked him, he could not speak a word. The queen-dauphin, seeing how thunderstruck she was, Look upon him, look upon him ! said she to madam de Cleves, and judge if this adventure be not his own.

In the mean time the duke de Nemours, finding of what importance it was to him to extricate himself out of so dangerous a difficulty, recovered himself from his first surprize, and became at once master of his wit and looks. I acknowledge, madam, said he, it is impossible to be more surprized and concerned than I was at the treachery of the viscount de Chartres, in relating

an adventure of a friend of mine, which I had in confidence imparted to him. I know how to be revenged of him, continued he, smiling with a calm air; which removed the suspicions the queen-dauphin had entertained of him: he has entrusted me with things of no very small importance; but I do not know, madam, why you do me the honour to make me a party in this affair. The viscount cannot say I am concerned in it, for I told him the contrary; I may very well be taken to be a man-in love, but I cannot believe, madam, you will think me of the number of those who are loved again. The duke was glad to say any thing to the queen-dauphin, which alluded to the inclination he had expressed for her formerly, in order to divert her thoughts from the subject in question. She imagined she understood well enough the drift of what he said; but without making any answer to it, she continued to rally him upon the embarrassment he was in. I was concerned, madam, said he, for the interest of my friend, and on account of the just reproaches he might make me for having told a secret which is dearer to him than life. He has, nevertheless, entrusted me but with one half of it, and has not told me the name of the person he loves; all I know is, that he is the most deeply in love of any man in the world, and has the most reason to complain.---Do you think he has reason to complain, replied the queen-dauphin, when he is loved again?---Do you believe he is, madam, replied he, and that a person who had a real passion could discover it to her husband? That lady, doubtless, is not acquainted with love, and has mistaken for it a slight acknowledgment of the fondness her lover had for her. My friend cannot flatter himself with the least hopes; but, unfortunate as he is, he thinks himself happy, at least, in having made her afraid of falling in love with him, and he would not change his condition for that of the happiest lover in the world.---Your friend has a passion very easy to be satisfied, said the queen-dauphin, and

and I begin to believe it is not yourself you are speaking of; I am almost, continued she, of the opinion of madam de Cleves, who maintains that this story cannot be true.---I do not really believe it can be true, answered madam de Cleves, who had been silent hitherto; and though it were possible to be true, how should it have been known? It is very unlikely that a woman, capable of so extraordinary a resolution, would have the weakness to publish it; and surely her husband would not have told it neither, or he must be a husband very unworthy to have been dealt with in so generous a manner. The duke de Nemours, who perceived the suspicions madam de Cleves had of her husband, was glad to confirm her in them, knowing he was the most formidable rival he had to overcome. Jealousy, said he, and a curiosity perhaps of knowing more than a wife has thought fit to discover, may make a husband do a great many imprudent things.

Madam de Cleves was put to the last proof of her power and courage; and not being able to endure the conversation any longer, she was going to say she was not well, when, by good fortune for her, the duchess of Valentinois came in, and told the queen-dauphin that the king was just coming; the queen-dauphin went into the closet to dress herself, and the duke de Nemours came up to madam de Cleves as she was following her. I would give my life, madam, said he, to have a moment's conversation with you; but though I have a world of important things to say to you, I think nothing is more so, than to entreat you to believe, that if I have said any thing in which the queen-dauphin may seem concerned, I did it for reasons which do not relate to her. Madam de Cleves pretended not to hear him, and left him without a look, and went towards the king, who was just come in. As there were abundance of people there, she trod upon her gown, and made a false step, which served her as an excuse to go out of a place she had not the power to stay in; and

so pretending to have received some hurt, she went home.

Monsieur de Cleves came to the Louvre, and was surprised not to find his wife there; they told him of the accident that had befallen her, and he went immediately home to enquire after her; he found her in bed, and perceived her hurt was not considerable. When he had been some time with her, he found her so excessive melancholy that he was surprised at it: What ails you, madam? says he; you seem to have some other grief than that which you complain of.---I feel the most sensible grief I can ever experience, answered she; what use have you made of that extraordinary, or rather foolish confidence which I placed in you? Did not I deserve to have my secret kept? and though I had not deserved it, did not your own interest engage you to it? Should your curiosity to know a name it was not reasonable for me to tell you, have obliged you to make a confidante to assist you in the discovery, nothing but that curiosity could have made you guilty of so cruel an indiscretion; the consequences of it are as bad as they possibly can be. This adventure is known, and I have been told it by those who are not aware that I am principally concerned in it.---What do you say, madam? answered he; you accuse me of having told what passed between you and me, and you inform me that the thing is known; I do not go about to clear myself from this charge, you cannot think me guilty of it; without doubt you have applied to yourself what was told you of some other.---Ah! sir, replied she, the world has not an adventure like mine, there is not another woman capable of such a thing: the story I have heard could not have been invented by chance; nobody could imagine any like it; an action of this nature never entered any thoughts but mine. The queen-dauphin has just told me the story; she had it from the viscount de Chartres, and the viscount from the duke de Nemours.---The duke de Nemours! cried
monfieur

monfieur de Cleves, like a man transported and desperate : How ! does the duke de Nemours know that you are in love with him, and that I am acquainted with it ? --- You are always for fingling out the duke de Nemours rather than any other, replied ſhe ; I have told you I will never answer you concerning your ſuſpicions : I am ignorant whether the duke de Nemours knows the part I have in this adventure, and that which you have aſcribed to him ; but he told it to the viſcount de Chartres, and ſaid he had it from one of his friends, who did not name the lady : this friend of the duke de Nemours muſt needs be one of yours, whom you entrufled the ſecret to, in order to clear up your ſuſpicions. --- Can one have a friend in the world, in whom one would reſoſe ſuch a confidence, replied monfieur de Cleves ; and would a man clear his ſuſpicions at the price of informing another with what one would wiſh to conceal from one's ſelf ? Think rather, madam, to whom you have ſpoken ; it is more probable this ſecret ſhould have eſcaped you than me ; you was not able alone to ſupport the trouble you found yourſelf in, and you endeavoured to comfort yourſelf by complaining to ſome confidante, who has betrayed you. --- Do not wholly deſtroy me, cried ſhe, and be not ſo hard-hearted as to accuſe me of a fault you have committed yourſelf : can you ſuſpect me of it ? and do you think, becauſe I was capable of informing you of this matter, I was therefore capable of informing another ?

The confeſſion which madam de Cleves had made to her huſband was ſo great a mark of her ſincerity, and ſhe ſo ſtrongly denied that ſhe had intruſted it to any other, that monfieur de Cleves did not know what to think. On the other hand, he was ſure he had never ſaid any thing of it ; it was a thing that could not have been gueſſed, and yet it was known ; it muſt therefore come from one of them two ; but what grieved him moſt was, to know that this ſecret was in the hands of ſomebody

somebody else, and that, in all probability, it would be soon divulged.

Madam de Cleves thought much after the same manner; she found it equally impossible that her husband should, or should not have spoken of it. What the duke de Nemours had said to her, that curiosity might make a husband do indiscreet things, seemed so justly applicable to monsieur de Cleves's condition, that she could not think he said it by chance; and the probability of this made her conclude, that monsieur de Cleves had abused the confidence she had placed in him. They were so taken up, the one and the other, with their respective thoughts, that they continued silent a great while; and when they broke from this silence, they only repeated the same things they had already said very often; their hearts and affections grew more and more estranged from each other.

It is easy to imagine how they passed the night; monsieur de Cleves could no longer sustain the misfortune of seeing a woman, whom he adored, in love with another; he grew quite heartless, and thought he had reason to be so in an affair where his honour and reputation were so deeply wounded: he knew not what to think of his wife, and was at a loss what conduct he should prescribe to her, or what he should follow himself; he saw nothing on all sides but precipices and rocks: at last, after having been long tossed to and fro in suspense, he considered he was soon to set out for Spain, and resolved to do nothing which might encrease the suspicion or knowledge of his unfortunate condition. He went to his wife, and told her, that what they had to do was not to debate between themselves who had discovered the secret; but to make it appear, that the story which was got abroad, was a business in which she had no concern; that it depended upon her to convince the duke of Nemours and others of it; that she had nothing to do but to behave herself to him with that coldness and reserve which she ought to have.

have for a man who professed love to her; that by this proceeding she would easily remove the opinion he entertained of her being in love with him; and therefore she needed not to trouble herself as to what he might hitherto have thought, since, if for the future she discovered no weakness, his former thoughts would vanish of themselves; and that especially she ought to frequent the Louvre and the assemblies as usual.

Having said this, monsieur de Cleves left his wife without waiting her answer; she thought what he said very reasonable, and the resentment she had against the duke de Nemours, made her believe she should be able to comply with it with a great deal of ease; but it seemed a hard task to her to appear at the marriage with that freedom and tranquillity of spirit which the occasion required. Nevertheless, as she was to carry the queen-dauphin's train, and had been distinguished with that honour in preference to a great many other princesses, it was impossible to excuse herself from it, without making a great deal of noise, and putting people upon enquiring into the reasons of it. She resolved therefore to do her utmost, and employed the rest of the day in preparing herself for it, and in endeavouring to forget the thoughts that gave her so much uneasiness; and to this purpose she locked herself up in her closet: of all her griefs the most violent was, that she had reason to complain of the duke de Nemours, and could find no excuse to urge in his favour; she could not doubt but he had related this adventure to the viscount de Chartres; he had owned it himself; nor could she any more doubt, from his manner of speaking of it, but that he knew the adventure related to her; how could she excuse so great an imprudence? and what was become of that extreme discretion which she had so much admired in this prince? He was discreet, said she, while he was unhappy; but the thought of being happy, though on uncertain grounds, has put an end to his discretion; he could not consider that he was beloved, without desiring to have it known; he

he said every thing he could say; I never acknowledged it was he I was in love with; he suspected it, and has declared his suspicions; if he had been sure of it, he might have acted as he has; I was to blame for thinking him a man capable of concealing what flattered his vanity; and yet it is for this man, whom I thought so different from other men, that I am become like other women, who was so unlike them before. I have lost the heart and esteem of a husband who ought to have been my happiness; I shall soon be looked upon by all the world as a person led away by an idle and violent passion. He for whom I entertain this passion is no longer ignorant of it; and it was to avoid these misfortunes that I hazarded my quiet, and even my life. These sad reflections were followed by a torrent of tears; but however great her grief was, she plainly perceived she should be able to support it, were she but satisfied in the duke de Nemours.

The duke was no less uneasy than she; the indiscretion he had been guilty of in telling what he did to the viscount de Chartres, and the mischievous consequences of it, vexed him to the heart; he could not represent to himself the affliction and sorrow he had seen madam de Cleves in, without being pierced with anguish; he was inconsolable for having said things to her about this adventure, which, though galant enough in themselves, seemed on this occasion too gross and unpolite, since they gave madam de Cleves to understand, he was not ignorant that she was the woman who had that violent passion, and that he was the object of it. It was before the utmost of his wishes to have a conversation with her; but now he found he ought rather to fear than desire it. What should I say to her? says he; should I go to discover further to her what I have made her too sensible of already? Shall I tell her I know she loves me? I, who have never dared to say I loved her? Shall I begin with speaking openly of my passion, that she may see my hopes have inspired me with boldness? Can I even think

think of approaching her, and of giving her the trouble to endure my sight? Which way could I justify myself? I have no excuse; I am unworthy of the least regard from madam de Cleves, and I even despair of her ever looking upon me: I have given her, by my own fault, better means of defending herself against me than any she was searching for, and perhaps searching for to no purpose. I lose by my imprudence the glory and happiness of being loved by the most beautiful and deserving lady in the world; but if I had lost this happiness, without involving her in the most extreme grief and sufferings at the same time, I should have had some comfort; for at this moment I am more sensible of the harm I have done her, than of that I have done myself in forfeiting her favour.

The duke de Nemours continued turning the same thoughts over and over, and tormenting himself a great while: the desire he had to speak to madam de Cleves came constantly into his mind; he thought of the means to do it; he thought of writing to her; but at last he found, considering the fault he had committed, and the temper she was in, his best way was to shew her a profound respect by his affliction and his silence, to let her see he durst not present himself before her, and to wait for what time, chance, and the inclination she had for him, might produce to his advantage: he resolved also not to reproach the viscount de Chartres for his unfaithfulness, for fear of confirming his suspicions.

The preparations for the espousals and marriage of Madame on the next day, so entirely took up the thoughts of the court, that madam de Cleves and the duke of Nemours easily concealed from the public their grief and uneasiness. The queen-dauphin spoke but slightly to madam de Cleves of the conversation they had had with the duke de Nemours; and monsieur de Cleves industriously shunned speaking to his wife of what was past; so that she did not find herself under so much embarrassment as she had imagined.

The

The espousals were solemnized at the Louvre; and after the feast and ball all the royal family went to lie at the bishop's palace, according to custom. In the morning, the duke of Alva, who always had appeared very plainly drest, put on a habit of cloth of gold, mixed with flame-colour, yellow and black, all covered over with jewels, and wore a close crown on his head. The prince of Orange very richly dressed also, with his liveries, and all the Spaniards with theirs, came to attend the duke of Alva from the Hotel de Villeroy where he lodged, and set out, marching four by four, till they came to the bishop's palace. As soon as he was arrived, they went in order to the church; the king led Madame, who wore also a close crown, her train being borne by mademoiselles de Montpensier and Longueville; the queen came next, but without a crown; after her followed the queen-dauphin, Madame, the king's sister, the duchess of Lorraine, and the queen of Navarre, their trains being borne by the princesses; the queens and the princesses were all of them attended with their maids of honour, who were richly drest in the same colour which they wore themselves; so that it was known by the colour of their habits whose maids they were: they mounted the place that was prepared in the church, and there the marriage-ceremonies were performed; they returned afterwards to dine at the bishop's, and went from thence about five a-clock to the palace where the feast was, and where the parliament, the sovereign courts, and the corporation of the city were desired to assist. The king, the queens, the princes and princesses sat at the marble table in the great hall of the palace; the duke of Alva sat near the new queen of Spain, below the steps of the marble table; and at the king's right hand was a table for the ambassadors, the archbishops, and the knights of the order, and on the other side one for the parliament.

The duke of Guise, drest in a robe of cloth of gold friezed, served the king as great chamberlain; the prince

prince of Conde as steward of the household, and the duke de Nemours as cup-bearer. After the tables were removed the ball began, and was interrupted by interludes and a great deal of extraordinary machinery; then the ball was resumed, and after midnight the king and the whole court returned to the Louvre. However full of grief madam de Cleves was, she appeared in the eyes of all beholders, and particularly in those of the duke de Nemours, incomparably beautiful. He durst not speak to her, though the hurry of the ceremony gave him frequent opportunities; but he expressed so much sorrow, and so respectful a fear of approaching her, that she no longer thought him to blame, though he had said nothing in his justification; his conduct was the same the following days, and wrought the same effect on the heart of madam de Cleves.

At last, the day of the tournament came; the queens were placed in the galleries that were prepared for them; the four champions appeared at the end of the lifts with a number of horses and liveries, the most magnificent sight that ever was seen in France.

The king's colours were white and black, which he always wore in honour of the duchess of Valentinois, who was a widow. The duke of Ferrara and his retinue had yellow and red; monsieur de Guise's carnation and white. It was not known at first for what reason he wore those colours; but it was soon remembered that they were the colours of a beautiful young lady whom he had been in love with while she was a maid, and whom he yet loved, though he durst not shew it. The duke de Nemours had yellow and black; why he had them could not be found out: madam de Cleves only knew the reason of it; she remembered to have said before him she loved yellow, and that she was sorry her complexion did not suit that colour. As for the duke, he thought he might take that colour without any indiscretion, since, not being worn by madam de Cleves, it could not be suspected to be her's.

The

The four champions shewed the greatest address that can be imagined; though the king was the best horseman in his kingdom, it was hard to say which of them most excelled. The duke de Nemours had a grace in all his actions which might have inclined to his favour persons less interested than madam de Cleves. She no sooner saw him appear at the end of the lists, but her heart felt uncommon emotions, and every course he made she could scarce hide her joy, when he had successfully finished his career.

In the evening, when all was almost over, and the company ready to break up, so it was for the misfortune of the state, that the king would needs break another lance; he sent orders to the count de Montgomery, who was a very dexterous combatant, to appear in the lists. The count begged the king to excuse him, and alledged all the reasons for it he could think of; but the king, almost angry, sent him word he absolutely commanded him to do it. The queen conjured the king not to run any more, told him he had performed so well that he ought to be satisfied, and desired him to go with her to her apartments. He made answer, It was for her sake that he would run again; and entered the barrier. She sent the duke of Savoy to him to entreat him a second time to return, but to no purpose. He ran; the lances were broke, and a splinter of the count de Montgomery's lance hit the king's eye, and stuck there. The king fell; his gentlemen and monsieur de Montmorency, who was one of the mareschals of the field, ran to him; they were astonished to see him wounded; but the king was not at all disheartened; he said, that it was but a slight hurt, and that he forgave the count de Montgomery. One may imagine what sorrow and affliction so fatal an accident occasioned on a day set apart to mirth and joy. The king was carried to bed, and the surgeons having examined his wound found it very considerable. The constable immediately called to mind the prediction which had been told the king, that he should
be

be killed in single fight; and he made no doubt but the prediction would be now accomplished.

The king of Spain, who was then at Brussels, being advertised of this accident, sent his physician, who was a man of great reputation; but that physician judged the king past hope.

A court so divided, and filled with so many opposite interests, could not but be in great agitation on the breaking out of so grand an event; nevertheless, all things were kept quiet, and nothing was seen but a general anxiety for the king's health: the queens, the princes and princesses hardly ever went out of his antichamber.

Madam de Cleves knowing that she was obliged to be there, that she should see there the duke de Nemours, and that she could not conceal from her husband the disorder she should be in upon seeing him; and being sensible also, that the mere presence of that prince would justify him in her eyes, and destroy all her resolutions, thought proper to feign herself ill. The court was too busy to give attention to her conduct, or to enquire whether her illness was real or counterfeit; her husband alone was able to come at the truth of the matter; but she was not at all averse to his knowing it. Thus she continued at home, altogether heedless of the great change that was soon expected, and full of her own thoughts, which she was at full liberty to give herself up to. Every one went to court to enquire after the king's health, and monsieur de Cleves came home at certain times to give her an account of it; he behaved himself to her in the same manner he used to do, except when they were alone; and then there appeared something of coldness and reserve: he had not spoke to her again concerning what had past, nor had she power, nor did she think it convenient, to resume the discourse.

The duke de Nemours, who had waited for an opportunity of speaking to madam de Cleves, was surprized and afflicted not to have had so much as the pleasure to see

see her. The king's illness encreased so much, that the seventh day he was given over by the physicians; He received the news of the certainty of his death with an uncommon firmness of mind; which was the more to be admired, considering that he lost his life by so unfortunate an accident, that he died in the flower of his age, happy, adored by his people, and beloved by a mistress he was desperately in love with. The evening before his death he caused Madame, his sister, to be married to the duke of Savoy without ceremony: one may judge what condition the duchess of Valentinois was in; the queen would not permit her to see the king, but sent to demand of her the king's signets, and the jewels of the crown which she had in her custody. The duchess enquired if the king was dead; and being answered, No; I have then as yet no other master, said she; and nobody can oblige me to restore what he has trusted in my hands. As soon as the king expired at Chateau de Tournelles, the duke of Ferrara, the duke of Guise, and the duke de Nemours conducted the queen-mother, the new king and the queen-consort to the Louvre. The duke de Nemours led the queen-mother. As they began to march, she stepped back a little, and told the queen, her daughter-in-law, it was her place to go first; but it was easy to see, that there was more of spleen than decorum in this compliment.

P A R T IV.

THE Queen-mother was now wholly governed by the cardinal of Loraine; the viscount de Chartres had no interest with her, and the passion he had for madam de Martigues and for liberty, hindered him from feeling this loss as it deserved to be felt. The cardinal, during
the

the ten days illness of the king, was at leisure to form his designs, and lead the queen into resolutions agreeable to what he had projected; so that the king was no sooner dead, but the queen ordered the constable to stay at Tournelles, with the corpse of the deceased king, in order to perform the usual ceremonies. This commission kept him at a distance, and out of the scene of action: for this reason the constable dispatched a courier to the king of Navarre, to hasten him to court, that they might join their interest to oppose the great rise of the house of Guise. The command of the army was given to the duke of Guise, and the care of the finances to the cardinal of Lorraine. The duchess of Valentinois was driven from court; the cardinal de Tournon, the constable's declared enemy, and the chancellor Olivier, the declared enemy of the duchess of Valentinois, were both recalled. In a word, the complexion of the court was entirely changed; the duke of Guise took the same rank as the princes of the blood, in carrying the king's mantle at the funeral ceremonies: he and his brothers carried all before them at court, not only by reason of the cardinal's power with the queen-mother, but because she thought it in her power to remove them, should they give her umbrage; whereas she could not so easily remove the constable, who was supported by the princes of the blood.

When the ceremonial of the mourning was over, the constable came to the Louvre, and was very coldly received by the king. He desired to speak with him in private; but the king called for messieurs de Guise, and told him before them, that he advised him to live at ease; that the finances and the command of the army were disposed of, and that when he had occasion for his advice, he would send for him to court. The queen received him in a yet colder manner than the king, and she even reproached him for having told the late king, that his children by her did not resemble him. The king of Navarre arrived, and was no better received; the

the prince of Conde, more impatient than his brother, complained aloud, but to no purpose: he was removed from court, under pretence of being sent to Flanders to sign the ratification of the peace. They shewed the king of Navarre a forged letter from the king of Spain, which charged him with a design of seizing that king's fortresses; they put him in fear for his dominions, and made him take a resolution to go to Bearn; the queen furnished him with an opportunity, by appointing him to conduct madam Elizabeth, and obliged him to set out before her; so that there remained no body at court that could balance the power of the house of Guise.

Though it was a mortifying circumstance for monsieur de Cleves not to conduct madam Elizabeth; yet he could not complain of it, by reason of the greatness of the person preferred before him; he regretted the loss of his employment not so much on account of the honour he should have received from it, as because it would have given him an opportunity of removing his wife from court, without the appearance of design in it.

A few days after the king's death, it was resolved the new king should go to Rheims to be crowned. As soon as this journey was talked of, madam de Cleves, who had staid at home all this while under pretence of illness, entreated her husband to dispense with her following the court, and to give her leave to go to take the air at Colomiers for her health: he answered, That whether her health was the reason or not of her desire, however, he consented to it: nor was it very difficult for him to consent to a thing he had resolved upon before: as good an opinion as he had of his wife's virtue, he thought it imprudent to expose her any longer to the sight of a man she was in love with.

The duke de Nemours was soon informed, that madam de Cleves was not to go along with the court; he could not find in his heart to set out without seeing her, and therefore, the night before his journey, he went to her

her house as late as decency would allow him, in order to find her alone. Fortune favoured his intention; and madam de Nevers and madam de Martigues, whom he met in the court as they were coming out, informed him they had left her alone. He went up in a concern and ferment of mind to be paralleled only by that which madam de Cleves was under, when she was told the duke de Nemours was come to see her. The fear lest he should speak to her of his passion, and lest she should answer him too favourably; the uneasiness this visit might give her husband; the difficulty of giving him an account of it, or of concealing it from him; all these things presented themselves to her imagination at once, and threw her into so great an embarrassment, that she resolved to avoid the thing of the world which perhaps she wished for the most. She sent one of her women to the duke de Nemours, who was in her anti-chamber, to tell him that she had lately been very ill, and that she was sorry she could not receive the honour which he designed her. What an affliction was it to the duke not to see madam de Cleves, and therefore not to see her, because she had no mind he should! He was to go away the next morning, and had nothing further to hope from Fortune. He had said nothing to her since that conversation at the queen-dauphin's apartments, and he had reason to believe that this imprudence in telling the viscount his adventure had destroyed all his expectations; in a word, he went away with every thing that could exasperate his grief.

No sooner was madam de Cleves recovered from the confusion which the thought of receiving a visit from the duke had given her, but all the reasons which had made her refuse it vanished; she was even satisfied she had been to blame; and had she dared, or had it not been too late, she would have had him called back.

Madam de Nevers and madam de Martigues went from the princess of Cleves to the queen-dauphin's, where they found monsieur de Cleves. The queen-



dauphin asked them from whence they came; they said they came from madam de Cleves, where they had spent part of the afternoon with a great deal of company, and that they had left nobody there but the duke de Nemours. These words, which they thought so indifferent, were not such with monsieur de Cleves: though he might well imagine the duke de Nemours had frequent opportunities of speaking to his wife, yet the thought that he was now with her, that he was there alone, and that he might speak to her of his love, appeared to him at this time a thing so new and insupportable, that jealousy kindled in his heart with greater violence than ever. It was impossible for him to stay at the queen's; he returned from thence, without knowing why he returned, or if he designed to go and interrupt the duke de Nemours. He was no sooner come home, but he looked about him to see if there was any thing by which he could judge if the duke was still there; it was some comfort to him to find he was gone, and it was a pleasure to reflect that he could not have been long there: he fancied, that, perhaps, it was not the duke de Nemours of whom he had reason to be jealous; and though he did not doubt of it, yet he endeavoured to doubt of it; but he was convinced of it by so many circumstances, that he continued not long in that pleasing uncertainty. He immediately went into his wife's room, and after having talked to her for some time about indifferent matters, he could not forbear asking her what she had done? and who she had seen? And accordingly she gave him an account. When he found she did not name the duke de Nemours, he asked her trembling, if those were all she had seen, in order to give her an occasion to name the duke, and that he might not have the grief to see she made use of any evasion. As she had not seen him, she did not name him; when monsieur de Cleves with accents of sorrow said, And have you not seen the duke de Nemours? or, Have you forgot him?---I have not seen him, indeed,

answered

answered she. I was ill, and sent one of my women to make my excuses.---You was ill then only for him; replied monsieur de Cleves, since you admitted the visits of others : Why this distinction with respect to the duke de Nemours ? Why is not he to you as another man ? Why should you be afraid of seeing him ? Why do you let him perceive that you are so ? Why do you shew him, that you make use of the power which his passion gives you over him ? Would you dare refuse to see him, but that you know he distinguishes your rigour from incivility ? But why should you exercise that rigour towards him ? From a person like you, all things are favours, except indifference.---I did not think, replied madam de Cleves, whatever suspicions you have of the duke de Nemours, that you could reproach me for not admitting a visit from him.---But I do reproach you, madam, replied he, and I have good ground for so doing ; why should you not see him, if he has said nothing to you ? But, madam, he has spoke to you ; if his passion had been expressed only by silence, it would not have made so great an impression upon you ; you have not thought fit to tell me the whole truth ; you have concealed the greatest part from me ; you have repented even of the little you have acknowledged ; and you have not the resolution to go on ; I am more unhappy than I imagined, more unhappy than any other man in the world. You are my wife ; I love you as my mistress, and see you at the same time in love with another, with the most amiable man of the court ; and he sees you every day, and know you are in love with him : Alas ! I believed that you would conquer your passion for him ; but sure I had lost my reason when I believed it was possible.---I do not know, replied madam de Cleves very sorrowfully, whether you was to blame in judging favourably of so extraordinary a proceeding as mine ; nor do I know if I was not mistaken, when I thought you would do me justice.---Doubt it not, madam, replied monsieur de Cleves,

you was mistaken ; you expected from me things as impossible as those I expected from you : How could you hope I should continue master of my reason ? Had you forgot that I was desperately in love with you, and that I was your husband ? Either of these two circumstances is enough to hurry a man into extremities. What may they not do both together ? Alas ! What do they not do ? My thoughts are violent and uncertain, and I am not able to controul them ; I no longer think myself worthy of you, nor do I think you are worthy of me ; I adore you, I hate you ; I offend you, I ask your pardon ; I admire you, I blush for my admiration : in a word, I have nothing of tranquillity or reason left about me. I wonder how I have been able to live since you spoke to me at Colomiers, and since you learned, from what the queen-dauphin told you, that your adventure was known ; I cannot discover how it came to be known, nor what passed between the duke de Nemours and you upon that subject ; you will never explain it to me, nor do I desire you to do it ; I only desire you to remember, that you have made me the most unfortunate, the most wretched of men.

Having spoke these words, monsieur de Cleves left his wife, and set out the next day without seeing her ; but he writ her a letter full of sorrow, and at the same time very kind and obliging. She gave an answer to it so moving, and so full of assurances both as to her past and future conduct, that as those assurances were grounded in truth, and were the real effect of her sentiments, the letter made great impressions on monsieur de Cleves, and gave him some tranquillity ; add to this, that the duke de Nemours, going to the king as well as himself, he had the satisfaction to know that he would not be in the same place with madam de Cleves. Every time that lady spoke to her husband, the passion he expressed for her, the handsomeness of his behaviour, the friendship she had for him, and the thought of what she owed him, made impressions in her heart that weakened the
idea

idea of the duke de Nemours : but it did not continue long ; that idea soon returned more lively than before.

For a few days after the duke was gone, she was hardly sensible of his absence ; afterwards it tortured her : ever since she had been in love with him, there did not pass a day, but she either feared or wished to meet him ; and it was a wounding thought to her to consider, that it was no more in the power of Fortune to contrive their meeting.

She went to Colomiers, and ordered to be carried thither the large pictures she had caused to be copied from the originals which the duchess of Valentinois had procured to be drawn for her fine house of Annet. All the remarkable actions that had past in the late king's reign were represented in these pieces, and among the rest was the siege of Metz ; and all those who had distinguished themselves at that siege were painted much to the life. The duke de Nemours was of this number ; and it was that, perhaps, which had made madam de Cleves desirous of having the pictures.

Madam de Martigues not being able to go along with the court, promised her to come and pass some days at Colomiers. Though they divided the queen's favour, they lived together without envy or coldness ; they were friends, but not confidantes : Madam de Cleves knew that madam de Martigues was in love with the viscount ; but madam de Martigues did not know that madam de Cleves was in love with the duke de Nemours, nor that she was beloved by him. The relation madam de Cleves had to the viscount, made her more dear to madam de Martigues ; and madam de Cleves was also fond of her as a person who was in love as well as herself, and with an intimate friend of her own lover.

Madam de Martigues came to Colomiers according to her promise, and found madam de Cleves living in a very solitary manner : that princess affected a perfect solitude, and passed the evenings in her garden, without being accompanied even by her domesticks ; she frequently

quently came into the pavilion where the duke de Nemours had overheard her conversation with her husband; she delighted to be in the bower that was open to the garden, while her women and attendants waited in the other bower under the pavillion, and never came to her but when she called them. Madam de Martigues having never seen Colomiers, was surprized at the extraordinary beauty of it, and particularly with the pleasantness of the pavilion. Madam de Cleves and she usually passed the evenings there. The liberty of being alone in the night in so agreeable a place, would not permit the conversation to end soon between two young ladies, whose hearts were enflamed with violent passions; and they took great pleasure in conversing together, though they were not confidantes. Madam de Martigues would have left Colomiers with great reluctance, had she not quitted it to go to a place where the viscount was: she set out for Chambort, the court being there.

The king had been anointed at Rheims by the cardinal of Lorraine, and the design was to pass the rest of the summer at the castle of Chambort, which was newly built. The queen expressed a great deal of joy upon seeing madam de Martigues again at court; and after having given her several proofs of it, she asked her how madam de Cleves did, and in what manner she passed her time in the country. The duke de Nemours and the prince of Cleves were with the queen at that time. Madam de Martigues, who had been charmed with Colomiers, related all the beauties of it, and enlarged extremely on the description of the pavilion in the forest, and on the pleasure madam de Cleves took in walking there alone part of the night. The duke de Nemours, who knew the place well enough to understand what madam de Martigues said of it, thought it was not impossible to see madam de Cleves there, without being seen by any body but her. He asked madam de Martigues some questions to get further lights; and the

the prince of Cleves, who had ey'd him very strictly while madam de Martigues was speaking, thought he knew what his design was. The questions the duke asked still more confirmed him in that thought, so that he made no doubt but his intention was to go and see his wife; he was not mistaken in his suspicions. This design entered so deeply into the duke de Nemours's mind, that after having spent the night in considering the proper methods to execute it, he went betimes the next morning to ask the king's leave to go to Paris, on some pretended occasion.

Monfieur de Cleves was in no doubt concerning the occasion of his journey; and he resolv'd to inform himself as to his wife's conduct, and to continue no longer in so cruel an uncertainty; he had a desire to set out the same time as the duke de Nemours did, and to hide himself where he might discover the success of the journey; but fearing his departure might appear extraordinary, and lest the duke, being advertised of it, might take other measures, he resolv'd to trust this business to a gentleman of his, whose fidelity and wit he was assured of: he related to him the embarrassment he was under, and what the virtue of his wife had been till that time; and ordered him to follow the duke de Nemours, to watch him narrowly, to see if he did not go to Colomiers, and if he did not enter the garden in the night.

The gentleman, who was very capable of this commission, acquitted himself of it with all the exactness imaginable. He followed the duke to a village within half a league of Colomiers, where the duke stopped; and the gentleman easily guessed his meaning was to stay there till night. He did not think it convenient to wait there, but passed on, and placed himself in that part of the forest where he thought the duke would pass. He took his measures very right; for it was no sooner night, but he heard somebody coming that way; and though it was dark, he easily knew the duke de Nemours;

mours; he saw him walk round the garden, as with a design to listen if he could hear any body, and to chuse the most convenient place to enter: the palisades were very high and double, in order to prevent people from coming in, so that it was very difficult for the duke to get over; however, he made a shift to do it. He was no sooner in the garden, but he discovered where madam de Cleves was; he saw a great light in the bower, all the windows of it were open; upon this, slipping along by the side of the palisade, he came up close to it, and one may easily judge what were the emotions of his heart at that instant: he took his station behind one of the windows, which served him conveniently to see what madam de Cleves was doing. He saw she was alone; he saw her so inimitably beautiful, that he could scarce govern the transports which that sight gave him. The weather was hot, her head and neck were uncovered, and her hair hung carelessly about her. She lay on a couch with a table before her, on which were several baskets full of ribbands, out of which she chose some; and he observed she chose those colours which he wore at the tournament. He saw her make them up into knots for an Indian cane, which had been his, and which he had given to his sister; madam de Cleves took it from her, without seeming to know it had belonged to the duke. After she had finished her work with the sweetest grace imaginable, the sentiments of her heart shewing themselves in her countenance, she took a wax candle, and came to a great table over against the picture of the siege of Metz, in which was the portrait of the duke de Nemours; she sat down and set herself to look upon that pourtrait, with an attention and thoughtfulness which love only can give.

It is impossible to express what monsieur de Nemours felt at this moment; to see, at midnight, in the finest place in the world, a lady he adored; to see her without her knowing that he saw her, and to find her wholly taken up with things that related to him, and to the
passion

passion which she concealed from him ; this is what was never tasted nor imagined by any other lover.

The duke was so transported and beside himself, that he continued motionless, with his eyes fixed on madam de Cleves, without thinking how precious his time was : when he was a little recovered, he thought it best not to speak to her till she came into the garden ; and he imagined he might do it there with more safety, because she would be at a greater distance from her women ; but finding she staid in the bower, he resolved to go in : when he was upon the point of doing it, what was his confusion ! How fearful was he of displeasing her, and of changing that countenance, where so much sweetness dwelt, into looks of anger and resentment !

To come to see madam de Cleves, without being seen by her, had no impudence in it ; but to think of shewing himself appeared very unwise ; a thousand things now came into his mind which he had not thought of before ; it carried in it somewhat extremely bold and extravagant, to surprize in the middle of the night a person to whom he had never yet spoke of his passion : he thought he had no reason to expect she would hear him, but that she would justly resent the danger to which he exposed her by accidents which might rise from this attempt : all his courage left him, and he was several times upon the point of resolving to go back again without shewing himself ; yet urged by the desire of speaking to her, and heartened by the hopes which every thing he had seen gave him, he advanced some steps ; but in such disorder, that a scarf he had on entangled in the window, and made a noise. Madam de Cleves turned about ; and whether her fancy was full of him, or that she stood in a place so directly to the light that she might know him, she thought it was he ; and without the least hesitation, or turning towards the place where he was, she entered the bower where her women were. On her entering she was in such disorder, that

to conceal it, she was forced to say she was ill: she said it too in order to employ her people about her, and to give the duke time to retire. When she had made some reflection, she thought she had been deceived, and that her fancying she saw monsieur de Nemours was only the effect of imagination. She knew he was at Chambort; she saw no probability of his engaging in so hazardous an enterprise; she had a desire several times to re-enter the bower, and to see if there was any body in the garden. She wished, perhaps, as much as she feared, to find the duke de Nemours there; but at last, reason and prudence prevailed over her other thoughts, and she found it better to continue in the doubt she was in, than to run the hazard of satisfying herself about it. She was a long time ere she could resolve to leave a place to which she thought the duke was so near; and it was almost day-break when she returned to the castle.

The duke de Nemours staid in the garden, as long as there was any light; he was not without hopes of seeing madam de Cleves again, though he was convinced that she knew him, and that she went away only to avoid him; but when he found the doors were shut, he knew he had nothing more to hope; he went to take horse near the place where monsieur de Cleves's gentleman was watching him. This gentleman followed him to the same village where he had left him in the evening. The duke resolved to stay there all the day, in order to return at night to Colomiers, to see if madam de Cleves would yet have the cruelty to shun him, or not expose herself to view: though he was very much pleased to find himself so much in her thoughts, yet was he extremely grieved, at the same time, to see her so naturally bent to avoid him.

Never was passion so tender and so violent as that of monsieur de Nemours; he walked under the willows, along a little brook which ran behind the house, where he lay concealed; he kept himself as much out of the way as possible, that he might not be seen by any body; he

he abandoned himself to the transports of his love ; and his heart was so full of tenderness, that he was forced to let fall some tears : but those tears were such as grief alone could not shed ; they had a mixture of sweetness and pleasure in them, which is to be found only in love.

He set himself to recal to mind all the actions of madam de Cleves ever since he had been in love with her ; her cruelty and rigour, and that modesty and decency of behaviour she had always observed towards him, though she loved him. For, after all, she loves me, said he ; she loves me ; I cannot doubt of it ; the deepest engagements and the greatest favours are not more certain proofs than those I have had. In the mean time, I am treated with the same rigour as if I were hated ; I hoped something from time, but I have no reason to expect it any longer ; I see her always equally on her guard against me and against herself ; if I were not loved, I should make it my business to please ; but I do please ; she loves me, and tries to hide it from me. What have I then to hope, and what change am I to expect in my fortune ? Though I am loved by the most amiable person in the world, I am under that excess of passion which proceeds from the first certainty of being loved by her, only to make me more sensible of being ill used. Let me see that you love me, fair-princess, cried he, make me acquainted with your sentiments ; provided I know them once in my life from you, I am content that you resume for ever the cruelties with which you oppress me ; look upon me, at least, with the same eyes with which I saw you look that night upon my picture ; could you behold that with such sweet complacency, and yet avoid me with so much cruelty ? What are you afraid of ? Why does my love appear so terrible to you ? You love me, and you endeavour in vain to conceal it ; you have even given me involuntary proofs of it ; I know my happiness ; permit me to enjoy it, and cease to make me unhappy. Is it possible I should be loved by the princess

of Cleves, and yet be unhappy? How beautiful was she last night! How could I forbear throwing myself at her feet? If I had done it, I might perhaps have hindered her from shunning me; my respectful behaviour would have removed her fears; but, perhaps, after all, she did not know it was I; I afflict myself more than I need; she was only frightened to see a man at so unseasonable an hour.

These thoughts employ'd the duke de Nemours all the day; he wished impatiently for the night; and as soon as it came, he returned to Colomiers. Monsieur de Cleves's gentleman, who was disguised that he might be less observed, followed him to the place to which he had followed him the evening before, and saw him enter the garden again. The duke soon perceived that madam de Cleves had not run the risque of his making another effort to see her, the doors being all shut; he looked about on all sides to see if he could discover any light, but he saw none.

Madam de Cleves, suspecting he might return, continued in her chamber; she had reason to apprehend she should not always have the power to avoid him, and she would not submit herself to the hazard of speaking to him in a manner that would have been unsuitable to the conduct she had hitherto observed.

Monsieur de Nemours, though he had no hopes of seeing her, could not find in his heart soon to leave a place where she so often was; he passed the whole night in the garden, and found some pleasure, at least, in seeing the same objects which she saw every day; it was near sun-rise before he thought of retiring; but at last, the fear of being discovered obliged him to go away.

It was impossible for him to return to court without seeing madam de Cleves; he made a visit to his sister the duchess of Mercœur, at her house near Colomiers. She was extremely surprized at her brother's arrival; but he invented so probable a pretence for his journey, and conducted his plot so skilfully, that he drew her to
make

make the first proposal herself of visiting madam de Cleves. This proposal was executed that very day, and monsieur de Nemours told his sister, that he would leave her at Colomiers, in order to go directly to the king; he formed this pretence of leaving her at Colomiers, in hopes she would take her leave before him; and he thought he had found out by that means an infallible way of speaking to madam de Cleves.

The princess of Cleves, when they arrived, was walking in her garden; the sight of monsieur de Nemours gave her no small uneasiness, and put her out of doubt that it was he she had seen the foregoing night. The certainty of his having done so bold and imprudent a thing, gave her some little resentment against him; and the duke observed an air of coldness in her face, which sensibly grieved him. The conversation turned upon indifferent matters; and yet he had the skill all the while to shew so much wit, complaisance, and admiration for madam de Cleves, that part of the coldness she expressed towards him at first, left her in spite of herself.

When his fears were over, and he began to take heart, he shewed an extreme curiosity to see the pavilion in the forest; he spoke of it as of the most agreeable place in the world, and gave so exact a description of it, that madam de Mercœur said, he must needs have been there several times to know all the particular beauties of it so well. And yet I do not believe, replied madam de Cleves, that the duke de Nemours was ever there; it has been finished but a little while.---It is not long since I was there, replied the duke, looking upon her, and I do not know if I ought not to be glad you have forgot you saw me there. Madam de Mercœur, being taken up in observing the beauties of the gardens, did not attend to what her brother said; madam de Cleves blushed, and with her eyes cast down, without looking on monsieur de Nemours, I do not remember, said she, to have seen you there; and if you have been there,

it was without my knowledge.---It is true, madam, replied he, I was there without your orders, and I passed there the most sweet and cruel moments of my life.

Madam de Cleves understood very well what he said, but made him no answer; her care was to prevent madam de Mercœur from going into the bower, because the duke de Nemours's picture was there, and she had no mind she should see it; she managed the matter so well, that the time passed away insensibly, and madam de Mercœur began to talk of going home: but when madam de Cleves found that the duke and his sister did not go together, she plainly saw to what she was going to be exposed; she found herself under the same embarrassment she was in at Paris, and took also the same resolution; her fear, lest this visit should be a further confirmation of her husband's suspicions, did not a little contribute to determine her; and to the end monsieur de Nemours might not remain alone with her, she told madam de Mercœur she would wait upon her to the borders of the forest, and ordered her chariot to be got ready. The duke was struck with such a violent grief, to find that madam de Cleves still continued to exercise the same rigour towards him, that he turned pale that moment. Madam de Mercœur asked him if he was ill; but he looked upon madam de Cleves without being perceived by any body else, and made her sensible by his looks, that he had no other illness besides despair. However, there was no remedy, but he must let them go together, without daring to follow them; after what he had told his sister, that he was to go directly to court, he could not return with her, but went to Paris, and set out from thence the next day.

Monsieur de Cleves's gentleman had observed him all the while; he returned also to Paris; and when he found monsieur de Nemours was set out for Chambort, he took post to get thither before him, and to give an account of his journey. His master expected his return with

with impatience, as if the happiness or unhappiness of his life depended upon it.

As soon as he saw him, he judged from his countenance and silence, that the news he brought was very disagreeable; he was struck with sorrow, and continued some time without being able to speak; at last he made signs with his hand to him to withdraw: Go, says he, I see what you have to say to me, but I have not the power to hear it.---I can acquaint you with nothing, said the gentleman, upon which one can form any certain judgment; it is true, the duke de Nemours went two nights successively into the garden in the forest; and the day after, he was at Colomiers with the dukes of Mercœur.---It is enough, replied monsieur de Cleves, still making signs to him to withdraw; it is enough, I want no further information. The gentleman was forced to leave his master, abandoned to despair; nor ever was despair more violent. Few men of so high a spirit, and so passionately in love as the prince of Cleves, have experienced at the same time the grief arising from the falshood of a mistress, and the shame of being deceived by a wife.

Monsieur de Cleves could set no bounds to his affliction; he fell ill of a fever that very night, and his distemper was accompanied with such symptoms, that it was thought very dangerous. Madam de Cleves was informed of it, and came in all haste to him: when she arrived, he was still worse; besides, she observed something in him so cold and chilling with respect to her, that she was equally surprized and grieved at it; he even seemed to receive with pain the services she did him in his sickness; but at last, she imagined it was, perhaps, only the effect of his distemper.

When she was come to Blois, where the court then was; the duke de Nemours was overjoy'd to think she was at the same place where he was; he endeavour'd to see her, and went every day to the prince of Cleves's under pretence of enquiring how he did; but it was to

no

no purpose ; she did not stir out of her husband's room, and was grieved at heart for the condition he was in. It vexed monsieur de Nemours to see her under such affliction, an affliction which he plainly saw revived the friendship she had for monsieur de Cleves, and diverted the passion that lay kindling in her heart. The thought of this shocked him severely for some time ; but the extremity to which monsieur de Cleves's sickness was grown, opened to him a scene of new hopes ; he saw it was probable that madam de Cleves would be at liberty to follow her own inclinations, and that he might expect for the future a series of happiness and lasting pleasures ; he could not support the ecstasy of that thought, a thought so full of transport ! he banished it out of his mind for fear of becoming doubly wretched, if he happened to be disappointed in his hopes.

In the mean time monsieur de Cleves was given over by his physicians. One of the last days of his illness, after having had a very bad night, he said in the morning, he had a desire to sleep ; but madam de Cleves, who remained alone in his chamber, found that instead of taking repose he was extremely restless ; she came to him, and fell on her knees by his bed-side, her face all covered with tears ; and though monsieur de Cleves had taken a resolution not to shew her the violent displeasure he had conceived against her, yet the care she took of him, and the sorrow she expressed, which sometimes he thought sincere, and at other times the effect of her dissimulation and perfidiousness, distracted him so violently with opposite sentiments full of woe, that he could not forbear giving them vent.

You shed plenty of tears, madam, said he, for a death which you are the cause of, and which cannot give you the trouble you pretend to be in ; I am no longer in a condition to reproach you, added he with a voice weakened by sickness and grief ; I die through the dreadful grief and discontent you have given me ;
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ought so extraordinary an action, as that of your speaking to me at Colomiers, to have had so little consequences? Why did you inform me of your passion for the duke de Nemours, if your virtue was no longer able to oppose it? I loved you to that extremity, I would have been glad to have been deceived, I confess it to my shame; I have regretted that pleasing, false security out of which you drew me: Why did not you leave me in that blind tranquillity which so many husbands enjoy? I should, perhaps, have been ignorant all my life that you was in love with monsieur de Nemours. I shall die; added he; but know, that you make death pleasing to me, and that, after you have taken from me the esteem and affection I had for you, life would be odious to me. What should I live for? To spend my days with a person whom I have loved so much, and by whom I have been so cruelly deceived; or to live apart from her, and break out openly into violences so opposite to my temper, and the love I had for you? That love, madam, was far greater than it appeared to you; I concealed the greatest part of it from you, for fear of being importunate, or of losing somewhat in your esteem by a behaviour not becoming a husband: in a word, I deserved your affection; and I die without regret, since I have not been able to obtain it, and since I can no longer desire it. Adieu, madam! you will one day regret a man who loved you with a sincere and virtuous passion; you will feel the anxiety which reasonable persons meet with in intrigue and gallantry; and you will know the difference between such a love as I had for you, and the love of people who only profess admiration for you to gratify their vanity in seducing you; but my death will leave you at liberty, and you may make the duke de Nemours happy without guilt: What signifies any thing that can happen when I am no more; and why should I have the weakness to trouble myself about it?

Madara.

Madam de Cleves was so far from imagining that her husband suspected her virtue, that she heard all this discourse without comprehending the meaning of it, and without having any other notion about it, except that he reproached her for her inclination for the duke de Nemours; at last, starting all of a sudden out of her blindness, I guilty! cried she, I am a stranger to the very thought of guilt; the severest virtue could not have inspired any other conduct than that which I have followed, and I never acted any thing but what I could have wished you to have been witness to.---Could you have wished, replied monsieur de Cleves, looking on her with disdain, I had been a witness of those nights you passed with monsieur de Nemours? Ah! madam, is it you I speak of, when I speak of a lady that has passed nights with a man not her husband?---No, sir, replied she, it is not me you speak of; I never spent a night nor a moment with the duke de Nemours; he never saw me in private, I never suffered him to do it, nor would give him a hearing.---Speak no more of it, said he, interrupting her; false oaths or a confession would perhaps give me equal pain. Madam de Cleves could not answer him; her tears and her grief took away her speech; at last, struggling for utterance, Look on me at least, hear me, said she; if my interest only were concerned I would suffer these reproaches, but your life is at stake; hear me for your own sake; I am so innocent, Truth pleads so strongly for me, it is impossible but I must convince you.---Would to God you could! cried he; but what can you say? The duke de Nemours, has not he been at Colomiers with his sister? And did not he pass the two foregoing nights with you in the garden in the forest?---If that be my crime, replied she, it is easy to justify myself; I do not desire you to believe me, believe your servants and domesticks; ask them if I went into the garden the evening before monsieur de Nemours came to Colomiers, and if I did not go out of it the night before two hours sooner than

than I used to do?---After this, she told him, how she imagined she had seen somebody in the garden, and acknowledged that she believed it to be the duke de Nemours; she spoke to him with so much confidence, and truth so naturally persuades, even where it is not probable, that monsieur de Cleves was almost convinced of her innocence. I do not know, said he, whether I ought to believe you; I am so near death, that I would not know any thing that might make me die with reluctance; you have cleared your innocence too late; however it will be a comfort to me to depart with the thought that you are worthy of the esteem I have had for you; I beg you I may be assured of this further comfort, that my memory will be dear to you, and that if it had been in your power, you would have had for me the same passion which you had for another. He would have gone on, but was so weak that his speech failed him. Madam de Cleves sent for the physicians, who found him almost lifeless; yet he languished some days, and died at last with admirable constancy.

Madam de Cleves was afflicted to so violent a degree, that she lost in a manner the use of her reason. The queen was so kind as to come to see her, and carried her to a convent without her being sensible whither she was conducted; her sisters-in-law brought her back to Paris, before she was in a condition to feel distinctly even her griefs: when she was restored to her faculty of thinking, and reflected what a husband she had lost, and considered that she had caused his death by the passion which she had for another, the horror she had for herself and the duke de Nemours was not to be expressed.

The duke, in the beginning of her mourning, durst pay her no other respects but such as decency required; he knew madam de Cleves enough to be sensible that great importunities and eagerness would be disagreeable to her; but what he learned afterwards plainly convinced

vinced him that he ought to observe the same conduct a great while longer.

A servant of the duke's informed him, that monsieur de Cleves's gentleman, who was his intimate friend, had told him, in the excess of his grief for the loss of his master, that monsieur de Nemours's journey to Colomiers was the occasion of his death. The duke was extremely surprised to hear this ; but after having reflected upon it, he guessed the truth in part, and rightly judged what madam de Cleves's sentiments would be at first, and what a distance it would throw him from her, if she thought her husband's illness was occasioned by his jealousy ; he was of opinion that he ought not so much as to put her in mind of his name very soon ; and he abided by that conduct, however severe it appeared to him.

He took a journey to Paris, nor could he forbear calling at her house to enquire how she did. He was told, that she saw nobody, and that she had even given strict orders that they should not trouble her with an account of any that might come to see her. Those very strict orders, perhaps, were given with a view to the duke, and to prevent her hearing him spoken of ; but he was too much in love to be able to live so absolutely deprived of the sight of madam de Cleves ; he resolved to find the means, let the difficulty be what it would, to get out of a condition which was so insupportable to him.

The grief of that princess exceeded the bounds of reason ; a husband dying, and dying on her account, and with so much tenderness for her, never went out of her mind : she continually revolved in her thoughts what she owed him, and she condemned herself for not having had a passion for him, as if that had been a thing which depended on herself ; she found no consolation but in the thought, that she lamented him as he deserved to be lamented, and that she would do nothing during

during the remainder of her life, but what he would have been glad she should have done, had he lived.

She had often been thinking how he came to know, that the duke de Nemours had been at Colomiers; she could not suspect that the duke himself had told it; though it was indifferent to her whether he had or no, she thought herself so perfectly cured of the passion she had had for him; and yet she was grieved at the heart to think that he was the cause of her husband's death; and she remembered with pain the fear monsieur de Cleves expressed, when dying, lest she should marry the duke: but all these griefs were swallowed up in that for the loss of her husband, and she thought she had no other but that one.

After several months the violence of her grief abated, and she fell into a languishing kind of melancholy. Madam de Martigues made a journey to Paris, and constantly visited her during the time she staid there: she entertained her with an account of the court, and what passed there; and though madam de Cleves appeared unconcerned, yet still she continued talking on that subject in hopes to divert her.

She talked to her of the viscount, of monsieur de Guise, and of all others that were distinguished either in person or merit. As for the duke de Nemours, says she, I do not know if state-affairs have not taken possession of his heart in the room of galantry; he is abundantly less gay than he used to be, and seems wholly to decline the company of women; he often takes journies to Paris, and I believe he is there now. The duke de Nemours's name surprised madam de Cleves, and made her blush; she changed the discourse, nor did madam de Martigues take notice of her concern.

The next day madam de Cleves, who employed herself in things suitable to the condition she was in, went to a man's house in her neighbourhood, that was famous for working silk after a particular manner, and she designed

designed to bespeak some pieces for herself. Having seen several kinds of his work, she spied a chamber-door, where she thought there were more, and desired it might be opened: the master answered, he had not the key, and that the room was taken by a man, who came there sometimes in the day-time to draw the plans and prospects of the fine houses and gardens that were to be seen from his windows; he is one of the handsomest men I ever saw, added he, and does not look much like one that works for his living; whenever he comes here, I observe he always looks towards the gardens and houses, but I never see him work.

Madam de Cleves listened to this story very attentively; and what madam de Martigues had told her of monsieur de Nemours's coming now and then to Paris, she applied in her fancy to that handsome man, who came to a place so near her house; and this gave her an idea of monsieur de Nemours endeavouring to see her; which raised a disorder in her, of which she did not know the cause: she went towards the windows to see where they looked into, and she found they overlooked all her gardens, and directly faced her apartment: and when she was in her own room, she could easily see that very window where she was told the man came to take his prospects. The thought that it was the duke de Nemours, entirely changed the situation of her mind; she no longer found herself in that pensive tranquillity which she had begun to enjoy, her spirits were ruffled again as with a tempest: at last, not being able to stay at home, she went abroad to take the air in a garden without the suburbs, where she hoped to be alone; she walked about a great while, and found no likelihood of any one's being there.

Having crossed a little wilderness, she perceived at the end of the walk, in the most remote part of the garden, a kind of a bower open on all sides, and went towards it; when she was near, she saw a man lying on the benches, who seemed sunk into a deep
contemplation,

contemplation, and she discovered it was the duke de Nemours : upon this she stopped short ; but her attendants made some noise, which roused the duke out of his musing : he took no notice who the persons were that disturbed him, but got up in order to avoid the company that was coming towards him ; and making a low bow, which hindered him from seeing those he saluted, he turned into another walk.

If he had known whom he avoided, with what eagerness would he have returned ! But he walked down the alley, and madam de Cleves saw him go out at a back-door, where his coach waited for him. What an effect did this transient view produce in the heart of madam de Cleves ! What a flame rekindled out of the embers of her love, and with what violence did it burn ! She went and sat down in the same place from which monsieur de Nemours was newly risen, and seemed perfectly overwhelmed ; his image immediately possessed her fancy, and she considered him as the most amiable person in the world, as one who had long loved her with a passion full of veneration and sincerity, slighting all for her, paying respect even to her grief, to his own torture, labouring to see her without a thought of being seen by her, quitting the court (though the court's delight) to come and look on the walls where she was shut up, and to pass his melancholy hours in places where he could not hope to meet her ; in a word, a man whose attachment to her alone merited returns of love ; and for whom she had so strong an inclination, that she should have loved him, though she had not been beloved by him ; and besides, one whose quality was suitable to her's : all the obstacles that could rise from duty and virtue were now removed, and all the trace that remained on her mind of their former condition, was the passion the duke de Nemours had for her, and that which she had for him.

All these ideas were new to her ; her affliction for the death of her husband had left her no room for thoughts

thoughts of this kind ; but the sight of monsieur de Nemours revived them, and they crowded again into her mind ; but when she had taken her fill of them, and remembered that this very man, whom she considered as a proper match for her, was the same she had loved in her husband's life-time, and was the cause of his death, and that on his death-bed he had expressed a fear of her marrying him ; her severe virtue was so shocked at the imagination, that she thought it would be as criminal in her to marry monsieur de Nemours now, as it was to love him before : in short, she abandoned herself to these reflections so pernicious to her happiness, and fortified herself in them by the inconveniency which she foresaw would attend such a marriage. After two hours stay in this place she returned home, convinced that it was indispensably her duty to avoid the sight of the man she loved.

But this conviction, which was the effect of reason and virtue, did not carry her heart along with it ; her heart was so violently fixed on the duke de Nemours, that she became even an object of compassion, and was wholly deprived of rest. Never did she pass a night in so uneasy a manner ; in the morning, the first thing she did was to see if there was any body at the window which looked towards her apartment ; she saw there monsieur de Nemours, and was so surprised upon it, and withdrew so hastily, as made him judge she knew him ; he had often wished to be seen by her ; ever since he had found out that method of seeing her, and when he had no hopes of obtaining that satisfaction, his way was to go to muse in the garden where she found him.

Tired at last with so unfortunate and uncertain a condition, he resolved to attempt something to determine his fate : What should I wait for ? said he. I have long known she loves me ; she is free ; she has no duty now to plead against me ; why should I submit myself to the hardship of seeing her, without being seen by her or speaking to her ? Is it possible for love so absolutely to have

have deprived me of reason and courage, and to have rendered me so different from what I have been in all my other amours? It was fit I should pay a regard to madam de Cleves's grief; but I do it too long, and I give her leisure to extinguish the inclination she had for me.

After these reflections, he considered what measures he ought to take to see her; he found he had no longer any reason to conceal his passion from the viscount de Chartres; he resolved to speak to him of it, and to communicate to him his design with regard to his niece.

The viscount was then at Paris, the town being extremely full, and every body busy in preparing equipages and dresses to attend the king of Navarre, who was to conduct the queen of Spain: monsieur de Nemours went to the viscount, and made an ingenuous confession to him of all he had concealed hitherto, except madam de Cleves's sentiments, which he would not seem to know.

The viscount received what he told him with a great deal of pleasure, and assured him, that though he was not acquainted with his sentiments on that subject, he had often thought, since madam de Cleves had been a widow, that she was the only lady that deserved him. Monsieur de Nemours intreated him to give him an opportunity of speaking to her, and learning what disposition she was in.

The viscount proposed to carry him to her house; but the duke was of opinion she would be shocked at it, because as yet she saw nobody; so that they agreed, it would be better for the viscount to ask her to come to him, under some pretence, and for the duke to come to them by a private stair-case, that he might not be observed. Accordingly this was executed; madam de Cleves came, the viscount went to receive her, and led her into a great closet at the end of his apartment: some time after monsieur de Nemours came in, as by chance. Madam de Cleves was in great surprize to see him; she

blushed, and endeavoured to hide it. The viscount at first spoke of indifferent matters, and then went out, as if he had some orders to give, telling madam de Cleves he must desire her to entertain the duke in his stead, and that he would return immediately.

It is impossible to express the sentiments of monsieur de Nemours and madam de Cleves, when they saw themselves alone, and at liberty to speak to one another, as they had never been before: they continued silent a while; at length, said monsieur de Nemours, Can you, madam, pardon the viscount for giving me an opportunity of seeing you, and speaking to you, an opportunity which you have always so cruelly denied me? I ought not to pardon him, replied she, for having forgot the condition I am in, and to what he exposes my reputation. Having spoke these words, she would have gone away; but monsieur de Nemours stopping her, Fear not, madam, said he; you have nothing to apprehend; nobody knows I am here; hear me, madam, hear me, if not out of goodness, yet, at least, for your own sake, and to free yourself from the extravagancies which a passion I am no longer master of will infallibly hurry me into. Madam de Cleves now first yielded to the inclination she had for the duke de Nemours, and beholding him with eyes full of softness and charms, But what can you hope for, says she, from the complaisance you desire of me? You will, perhaps, repent that you have obtained it, and I shall certainly repent that I have granted it. You deserve a happier fortune than you have hitherto had, or than you can have for the future, unless you seek it elsewhere.---I, madam, said he, seek happiness any where else! Or, is there any happiness for me, but in your love? Though I never spoke of it before, I cannot believe, madam, that you are not acquainted with my passion, or that you do not know it to be the greatest and most sincere that ever was; What trials has it suffered in things you are a stranger to! What trials have you put it to by your rigour!

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Since you are desirous I should open myself to you, answered madam de Cleves, I will comply with your desire, and I will do it with a sincerity that is rarely to be met with in persons of my sex: I shall not tell you that I have not observed your passion for me; perhaps you would not believe me if I should tell you so; I confess, therefore, to you, not only that I have observed it, but that I have observed it in such lights as you yourself could wish it might appear to me in.---And if you have seen my passion, madam, said he, is it possible for you not to have been moved by it? And may I venture to ask, if it has made no impression on your heart?---You should have judged of that from my conduct, replied she; but I should be glad to know what you thought of it.---I ought to be in a happier condition, replied he, to venture to inform you; my fortune would contradict what I should say; all I can tell you, madam, is, that I heartily wished you had not acknowledged to monsieur de Cleves what you concealed from me, and that you had concealed from him what you made appear to me.---How came you to discover, replied she, blushing, that I acknowledged any thing to monsieur de Cleves?---I learned it from yourself, madam, replied he; but that you may the better pardon the boldness I shewed in listening to what you said, remember if I have made an ill use of what I heard, if my hopes rose upon it, or if I was the more encouraged to speak to you.

Here he began to relate how he had overheard her conversation with monsieur de Cleves; but she interrupted him before he had finished.---Say no more of it, said she, I see how you came to be so well informed; I suspected you knew the business but too well at the queen-dauphin's, who learned this adventure from those you had intrusted with it.

Upon this monsieur de Nemours informed her in what manner the thing came to pass. No excuses, says she; I have long forgiven you, without being informed how it was brought about; but since you have learned from

my own self what I designed to conceal from you all my life, I will acknowledge to you, that you have inspired me with sentiments I was unacquainted with before I saw you, and of which I had so slender an idea, that they gave me at first a surprize which still added to the pain that constantly attends them: I am the less ashamed to make you this confession, because I do it at a time when I may do it without a crime, and because you have seen that my conduct has not been governed by my affections.

Can you believe, madam, said monsieur de Nemours, falling on his knees, but I shall expire at your feet with joy and transport?---I have told you nothing, said she, smiling, but what you knew too well before.---Ah! madam, said he, what a difference is there between learning it by chance, and knowing it from yourself, and seeing that you are pleased I know it!---It is true, answered she, I would have you know it, and I find a pleasure in telling it you; I do not even know if I do not tell it you more for my own sake, than for yours; for, after all, this confession will have no consequences, and I shall follow the austere rules which my duty imposes upon me.---How, madam! you are not of that opinion, replied monsieur de Nemours; you are no longer under any obligation of duty; you are at liberty; and if I durst, I should even tell you, that it is in your power to act so, that your duty shall one day oblige you to preserve the sentiments you have for me.---My duty, replied she, forbids me to think of any man, but of you the last in the world, and for reasons which are unknown to you.---Those reasons, perhaps, are not unknown to me, answered he; but they are far from being good ones. I believe that monsieur de Cleves thought me happier than I was, and imagined that you approved of those extravagancies which my passion led me into without your approbation.---Let us talk no more of that adventure, said she; I cannot bear the thought of it, and the consequences of
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it have been such, that it is too melancholy a subject to be spoken of; it is but too true, that you were the cause of monsieur de Cleves's death; the suspicions which your inconsiderate conduct gave him cost him his life, as much as if you had taken it away with your own hands: judge what I ought to have done, had you two fought a duel, and he been killed; I know very well, it is not the same thing in the eye of the world; but with me there is no difference, since I know that his death was owing to you, and that it was on my account.---Ah! madam, said monsieur de Nemours, what phantom of duty do you oppose to my happiness? What, madam! shall a vain and groundless fancy hinder you from making a man happy, for whom you have an inclination? What! have I had some ground to hope I might pass my life with you? Has my fate led me to love the most deserving lady in the world? Have I observed in her all that can make a mistress adorable? Has she had no dislike to me? Have I found in her conduct every thing which I could wish for in a wife? For, in short, madam, you are perhaps the only person in whom those two characters have ever concurred to the degree they are in you; those who marry mistresses by whom they are loved, tremble when they marry them, and cannot but fear lest they should observe the same conduct towards others, which they observed towards them; but in you, madam, I can fear nothing; I see nothing in you but matter of admiration: have I had a prospect of so much felicity, for no other end but to see it obstructed by you? Ah! madam, you forget, that you have distinguished me above other men; or rather, you have not distinguished me; you have deceived yourself, and I have flattered myself.

You have not flattered yourself, replied she; the reasons of my duty would not perhaps appear so strong to me, without that distinction of which you doubt; and it is that which makes me apprehend unfortunate consequences from your alliance.---I have nothing to answer;

madam, replied he, when you tell me you apprehend unfortunate consequences; but I own, that after all you have been pleased to say to me, I did not expect from you so cruel a reason.---The reason you speak of, replied madam de Cleves, is so little disobliging as to you, that I do not know how to tell it you.---Alas! madam, said he, how can you fear I should flatter myself too much, after what you have been saying to me?---I shall continue to speak to you, says she, with the same sincerity with which I began; and I will lay aside that delicacy and reserve that modesty obliges one to in a first conversation; but I conjure you to hear me without interruption.

I think I owe the affection you have for me, the poor recompence not to hide from you any of my thoughts, and to let you see them such as they really are; this, in all probability, will be the only time I shall allow myself the freedom to discover them to you; and I cannot confess without a blush, that the certainty of not being loved by you, as I am, appears to me so dreadful a misfortune, that if I had not invincible reasons grounded on my duty, I could not resolve to subject myself to it; I know that you are free, that I am so too, and that circumstances are such, that the public, perhaps, would have no reason to blame either you or me, should we unite ourselves for ever; but do men continue to love, when under engagements for life? Ought I to expect a miracle in my favour? And shall I place myself in a condition of seeing that passion come to an end, in which I should place all my felicity? Monsieur de Cleves was, perhaps, the only man in the world capable of continuing to love after marriage; it was my ill fate that I was not able to enjoy that happiness; and, perhaps, his passion had not lasted, but that he found none in me; but I should not have the same way of preserving yours; I even think your constancy is owing to the obstacles you have met with; you have met with enough to animate you to conquer them; and my unguarded actions, or what you learned by chance, gave you hopes enough
not

not to be discouraged.---Ah! Madam, replied monsieur de Nemours, I cannot keep the silence you enjoined me; you do me too much injustice, and make it appear too clearly that you are far from being prepossessed in my favour.---I confess, answered she, that my passions may lead me, but they cannot blind me; nothing can hinder me from knowing that you are born with a disposition for galantry, and have all the qualities proper to give success; you have already had a great many amours, and you will have more; I should no longer be she you placed your happiness in; I should see you as warm for another as you had been for me; this would afflict me, and I am not sure I should not have the torment of jealousy: I have said too much to conceal from you, that you have already made me know what jealousy is; and that I suffered such cruel inquietudes the evening the queen gave me madam de Themines's letter, which, it was said, was addressed to you, that to this moment I retain an idea of it, which makes me believe it is the worst of all ills.

There is scarce a woman but out of vanity or inclination desires to engage you; there are very few whom you do not please, and my own experience would make me believe, that there are none whom it is not in your power to please: I should think you always in love and beloved, nor should I be often mistaken; and yet in this case, I should have no remedy but patience; nay, I question if I should dare to complain. A lover may be reproached; but can a husband be so, when one has nothing to urge, but that he loves one no longer? But admit I could accustom myself to bear a misfortune of this nature, yet how could I bear that of imagining I constantly saw monsieur de Cleves accusing you of his death, reproaching me with having loved you, with having married you, and shewing me the difference betwixt his affection and yours? It is impossible to overrule such strong reasons as these; I must continue in the condition I am in, and in the resolution I have taken

never to alter it.---Do you believe you have the power to do it, madam? cried the duke de Nemours: Do you think your resolution can hold out against a man who adores, and who has the happiness to please you? It is more difficult than you imagine, madam, to resist a person who pleases and loves one at the same time; you have done it by austerity of virtue, which is almost without example; but that virtue no longer opposes your inclinations, and I hope you will follow them in spite of yourself.---I know nothing can be more difficult than what I undertake, replied madam de Cleves; I distrust my strength in the midst of my reasons; what I think I owe to the memory of monsieur de Cleves, would be a weak consideration, if not supported by the interest of my ease and repose; and the reasons of my repose have need to be supported by those of my duty; but though I distrust myself, I believe I shall never overcome my scruples, nor do I so much as hope to overcome the inclination I have for you; that inclination will make me unhappy, and I will deny myself the sight of you, whatever violence it is to me. I conjure you, by all the power I have over you, to seek no occasion of seeing me; I am in a condition which makes that criminal which might be lawful at another time; decency forbids all commerce between us. Monsieur de Nemours threw himself at her feet, and gave a loose to all the violent emotions with which he was agitated; he expressed both by his words and tears the liveliest and most tender passion that ever heart was touched with: nor was the heart of madam de Cleves insensible; she looked upon him with eyes swelled with tears. Why was it, cries she, that I can charge you with monsieur de Cleves's death? Why did not my first acquaintance with you begin since I have been at liberty? or why did not I know you before I was engaged? Why does Fate separate us by such invincible obstacles?---There are no obstacles, madam, replied monsieur de Nemours; it is you alone oppose my happiness; you impose on your-
self

self a law which virtue and reason do not require you to obey.---It is true, says she, I sacrifice a great deal to a duty which does not subsist but in my imagination; have patience, and expect what time may produce; monsieur de Cleves is but just expired, and that mournful object is too near to leave me clear and distinct views; in the mean time, enjoy the satisfaction to know you have gained the heart of a person, who would never have loved any one, had she not seen you. Believe the inclination I have for you will last for ever, and that it will be uniform and the same, whatever becomes of me. Adieu! said she; this is a conversation I ought to blush for; however, give an account of it to the viscount; I agree to it, and desire you to do it.

With these words she went away, nor could monsieur de Nemours detain her. In the next room she met with the viscount, who seeing her under so much concern would not speak to her, but led her to her coach without saying a word. He returned to monsieur de Nemours, who was so full of joy, grief, admiration, and of all those affections that attend a passion full of hope and fear, that he had not the use of his reason. It was a long time ere the viscount could get from him an account of the conversation; at last the duke related it to him; and monsieur de Chartres, without being in love, no less admired the virtue, wit, and merit of madam de Cleves, than did monsieur de Nemours himself. They began to examine what issue could reasonably be hoped for in this affair; and, however fearful the duke de Nemours was from his love, he agreed with the viscount, that it was impossible madam de Cleves should continue in the resolution she was in; they were of opinion, nevertheless, that it was necessary to follow her orders, for fear, upon the public's perceiving the inclination he had for her, she should make declarations, and enter into engagements, with respect to the world, that she would afterwards abide by, lest it should be thought she loved him in her husband's life-time.

Monfieur de Nemours determined to follow the king; it was a journey he could not well excufe himfelf from, and fo he refolved to go, without endeavouring to fee madam de Cleves again from the window out of which he had fometimes feen her; he begged the vifcount to fpeak to her: and what did he not defire him to fay in his behalf? What an infinite number of reafons did he furnifh him with, to perfuade her to conquer her Scruples! In fhort, great part of the night was fpent before he thought of going away.

As for madam de Cleves, ſhe was in no condition to reft: it was a thing fo new to her to have broke loofe from the reſtraints ſhe had laid on herſelf; to have endured the firſt declarations of love that ever were made to her; and to have confeſſed that ſhe herſelf was in love with him that made them; all this was fo new to her, that ſhe ſeemed quite another perſon. She was ſurprized at what ſhe had done; ſhe repented of it; ſhe was glad of it; all her thoughts were full of anxiety and paſſion: ſhe examined again the reafons of her duty which obſtructed her happineſs; ſhe was grieved to find them fo ſtrong, and was ſorry that ſhe had made them out fo clear to monſieur de Nemours. Though ſhe had entertained thoughts of marrying him, as ſoon as ſhe beheld him in the garden of the ſuburbs, yet her late converſation with him made a much greater impreſſion on her mind; at ſome moments ſhe could not comprehend how ſhe could be unhappy by marrying him, and ſhe was ready to fay in her heart, that her ſcruples as to what was paſt, and her fears for the future, were equally groundleſs: at other times, reaſon and her duty prevailed in her thoughts, and violently hurried her into a reſolution not to marry again, and never to ſee monſieur de Nemours; but this was a reſolution hard to be eſta- bliſhed in a heart ſo ſoftened as hers, and ſo lately abandoned to the charms of love. At laſt, to give herſelf a little eaſe, ſhe concluded that it was not yet neceſſary to do herſelf the violence of coming to any reſolution; and

and decency allowed her a considerable time to determine what to do : however, she resolved to continue firm in having no commerce with monsieur de Nemours. The viscount came to see her, and pleaded his friend's cause with all the wit and application imaginable ; but could not make her alter her conduct, or recal the severe orders she had given to monsieur de Nemours : she told him, her design was not to change her condition ; that she knew how difficult it was to stand to that design, but that she hoped she should be able to do it. She made him so sensible how far she was affected with the opinion that monsieur de Nemours was the cause of her husband's death, and how much she was convinced that it would be contrary to her duty to marry him, that the viscount was afraid it would be very difficult to take away those impressions ; he did not, however, tell the duke what he thought, when he gave him an account of his conversation with her ; but left him as much hope as a man who is loved may reasonably have.

They set out the next day, and went after the king ; the viscount wrote to madam de Cleves at monsieur de Nemours's request, and in a second letter, which soon followed the first, the duke writ a line or two in his own hand ; but madam de Cleves determined not to depart from the rules she had prescribed herself ; and fearing the accidents that might happen from letters, informed the viscount that she would receive his letters no more, if he continued to speak of monsieur de Nemours ; and did it in so peremptory a manner, that the duke desired him not to mention him.

During the absence of the court, which was gone to conduct the queen of Spain as far as Poitou, madam de Cleves continued at home ; and the more distant she was from monsieur de Nemours, and from every thing that could put her in mind of him, the more she recalled the memory of the prince of Cleves, which she made it her glory to preserve ; the reasons she had not to marry the duke de Nemours appeared strong with respect to her duty, but invincible with respect to her

quiet ; the opinion she had, that marriage would put an end to his love, and the torments of jealousy, which she thought the infallible consequences of marriage, gave her the prospect of a certain unhappiness if she consented to his desires ; on the other hand, she thought it impossible, if he were present, to refuse the most amiable man in the world, the man who loved her, and whom she loved, and to oppose him in a thing that was neither inconsistent with virtue nor decency. She thought that nothing but absence and distance could give her the power to do it ; and she found she stood in need of them, not only to support her resolution not to marry, but even to keep her from seeing monsieur de Nemours ; she resolved, therefore, to take a long journey, in order to pass away the time which decency obliged her to spend in retirement ; the fine estate she had near the Pyrenees seemed the most proper place she could make choice of ; she set out a few days before the court returned, and writ at parting to the viscount, to conjure him not to think of once enquiring after her, or of writing to her.

Monsieur de Nemours was as much troubled at this journey, as another would have been for the death of his mistress. The thought of being deprived so long a time of the sight of madam de Cleves grieved him to the soul, especially as it happened at a time when he had lately enjoyed the pleasure of seeing her, and of seeing her moved by his passion ; however, he could do nothing but afflict himself, and his affliction increased every day. Madam de Cleves, whose spirits had been so much agitated, was no sooner arrived at her country-seat, but she fell desperately ill ; the news of it was brought to court ; monsieur de Nemours was inconsolable ; his grief proceeded even to despair and extravagance ; the viscount had much ado to hinder him from discovering his passion in public, and as much ado to keep him from going in person to know how she did ; the relation and friendship between her and the viscount served as an excuse for sending frequent messengers ; at last they
heard

heard she was out of the extremity of danger she had been in ; but continued in a languishing malady, that left but little hopes of life.

The nature of her disease gave her a prospect of death, both near and at a distance, and shewed her the things of this life in a very different view from that in which they are seen by people in health : the necessity of dying, to which she saw herself so near, taught her to wean herself from the world, and the lingeringness of her distemper brought her to a habit in it ; yet, when she was a little recovered, she found that monsieur de Nemours was not effaced from her heart ; but to defend herself against him, she called to her aid all the reasons which she thought she had never to marry him ; after a long conflict in herself, she subdued the relics of that passion which had been weakened by the sentiments her illness had given her ; the thoughts of death had reproached her with the memory of monsieur de Cleves, and this remembrance was so agreeable to her duty, that it made deep impressions in her heart ; the passions and engagements of the world appeared to her in the light, in which they appear to persons who have more great and more distant views. The weakness of her body, which was brought very low, aided her in preserving these sentiments ; but as she knew what power opportunities have over the wisest resolutions, she would not hazard the breach of those she had taken, by returning into any place where she might see him she loved ; she retired, under pretence of change of air, into a convent, but without declaring a settled resolution of quitting the court.

Upon the first news of it, monsieur de Nemours felt the weight of this retreat, and saw the importance of it ; he presently thought he had nothing more to hope, but omitted not any thing that might oblige her to return ; he prevailed with the queen to write ; he made the viscount not only write, but go to her ; but all to no purpose. The viscount saw her, but she did not tell him she had fixed her resolution ; and yet he judged she

she would never return to court. At last monsieur de Nemours himself went to her, under pretence of using the waters. She was extremely grieved and surprized to hear he was come, and sent him word by a person of merit about her, that she desired him not to take it ill, if she did not expose herself to the danger of seeing him, and of destroying, by his presence, those sentiments she was obliged to preserve; that she desired he should know, that having found it both against her duty and peace of mind to yield to the inclination she had to be his, all things else were become so indifferent to her, that she had renounced them for ever; that she thought only of another life, and had no sentiment remaining as to this, but the desire of seeing him in the same dispositions she was in.

Monsieur de Nemours was like to have expired in the presence of the lady who told him this; he begged her a thousand times to return to madam de Cleves, and to get leave for him to see her; but she told him, the princess had not only forbidden her to come back with any message from him, but even to report the conversation that should pass between them. At length, monsieur de Nemours was obliged to go back, oppressed with the heaviest grief a man is capable of, who has lost all hopes of ever seeing again a person whom he loved: not only with the most violent, but most natural and sincere passion that ever was; yet still he was not utterly discouraged, but used all imaginable methods to make her alter her resolution; at last, after several years, time and absence abated his grief, and extinguished his passion. Madam de Cleves lived in a manner that left no probability of her ever returning to court; she spent one part of the year in that religious house, and the other at her own, but still continued the austerity of retirement, and constantly employ'd herself in exercises more holy than the severest convents can pretend to; and her life, though it was short, left examples of inimitable virtues.

THE
FRUITLESS ENQUIRY:

WRITTEN BY

Mrs. HAYWOOD.

CHARACTER OF THE
FRUITLESS ENQUIRY;
AND
ANECDOTES OF ITS AUTHOR,
BY THE EDITOR.

THE following pages are selected from a Novel* under the same title, and from which I have only made extracts; as some of the stories it contains are inconsistent with the plan of this work, as being either gross in the subjects, or indelicate in the expression.

* By Mrs. Eliza Haywood, a voluminous novelist, born in 1696. In the early part of her life she wrote a number of loose tales, and dealt a good deal in personal slander. Mrs. Manley's *Atalantis* gave her a hint, upon which she framed *The Court of Carimania*, and the new *Utopia*, with other pieces of the same nature. She attempted dramatic writing, and acting also; but met with little success in either. However, she shewed herself a writer of great ingenuity in the manner of treating her subjects; but her latter works, among which this is one, have made proper atonement for the indelicacy and immorality of her former writings, as she appears to be a strong advocate on the side of Decency and Virtue. *The Female Spectator*, *The History of Betsy Thoughtless*, *Jemmy and Jenny Jessamy*, *The Invisible Spy*, and *A Present for a Servant-maid*, are among this latter class of her compositions. She died in 1759.

CHARACTER, &c.

The idea on which this piece is founded, has a good deal of merit in it; as tending to abate envy, and conciliate content; by shewing, in a variety of instances, that appearances are frequently fallacious; that perfect or permanent happiness is not the lot of mortal life; and that peace of mind and rational enjoyment are only to be found in bosoms free from guilt, and from intimate connection with the guilty.

THE

FRUITLESS ENQUIRY.

A Certain nobleman of Venice, dying in the prime of his years, left behind him a widow called Miramillia, justly esteemed one of the most lovely women of the age, and a little son not exceeding six years old ; so dear to his mother, that though her beauty, wealth, and accomplishments, attracted the love and admiration of almost as many as beheld her, and the noblest youth in the republic desired her in marriage ; yet did she decline all the advantages offered her for this darling of her soul, and resolved to continue the remainder of her days in a single state ; fearing, that in bestowing herself, she should also be obliged to relinquish the power she had of managing the estate for him, to one who would less consult his interest. Never was mother more anxious for the welfare of a child, nor never did any child seem more to deserve the affections of a parent ; so greatly did he improve on the education she allowed him, that his behaviour was her pride, as well as pleasure : as he encreased in years, he encreased also in every manly grace. There was no art, no science, no exercise, be-
fitting.

sitting his quality, of which he was not a perfect master; and in many of them he excelled those whose profession it was to instruct.

Till he arrived at the age of twenty, did his happy mother glory in maternal fondness; and was so far from believing she ever should have reason to do otherwise, that she scarce knew how to pity the misfortunes of those who lamented the undutifulness or ill management of their children: but, alas! on how weak a foundation do all human joys depend, and how little ought we to triumph in the transient blessings of fate, which in a moment may vanish, and in their room as-poignant ills arise! In the height of her satisfaction, just when she had seen the promising bloom of this young man arrive at maturity, and every wish was to its height completed, then all at once did misery fall on her, and she became more wretched than ever she had been blest.

Early one morning did this beloved son go out, as was frequently his custom, to indulge meditation in a fine wilderness adjacent to the castle; but night not bringing him home, nor the ensuing day, nor many others affording any tidings of him, the fears and perplexities of a mother so tenderly fond as was his, are not to be conceived. Through every part of the city she sent in search of him, but all her messengers returned without success; he could not be heard of, nor could any person be found that had seen him: days, weeks, and months past on in this manner, and quite raving with her griefs, she fell into a sort of superstitious credulity, which before she had despised; it was that of applying to fortune-tellers, in a vain expectation of knowing that from man, which Heaven permits not the discovery of even to the angels themselves. But her good sense not suffering her to place any great dependance on what they said, she no sooner heard the predictions of one, than she went to another, comparing them together, believing that if they agreed, they

they might be worthy of belief; but being different, one telling her he would speedily return, another that he was dead, a third that he was married to a woman unworthy of him; but a fourth, wiser than the rest, would not pretend to give her any direct account, but only told her, that to engage his return, she should procure a shirt made for him by the hands of a person so completely contented in mind, that there was no wish but that she enjoyed. If you can prevail on such a woman to undertake this little piece of work, said he, before it be finished, you will infallibly hear news of your son; but you must be certain, continued he, that the person you employ be perfectly at ease; if the least anxious thought, the most minute perplexity, discontent, or care, ruffles her mind, or ever throws a heaviness upon her spirits, the work will be of no effect.---Though this afflicted mother had too much good sense to imagine such a thing could be of any consequence to the obtaining her desires, yet the enchantment being of so innocent a nature, she resolved to make the experiment; and to that end, set herself to think which of her acquaintance was the most qualified for this important piece of sempstry. One she knew had vast possessions, all the grandeur which the world idolizes, beauty, wit, health, and a sweetness of disposition, which rendered her capable of enjoying those blessings; but then she was married to a man of so perverse a nature, that it took up her whole study to please him; and the little success she had in that endeavour, frequently gave her many bitter perturbations. Another, in all appearance, was possesd of every thing that can be wished, a wealthy and good husband, many fine children, and the general esteem and good character of the world; but she had made this lady the confidante of her passion for a young gentleman; and in that criminal inclination were all the pleasures of her life overwhelmed and lost. One had an undutiful son, another an unfortunate daughter, a third an extravagant

gant husband, a fourth an unloving one, a fifth was distracted with a step-dame's overlooking eye, a sixth had married a man, whose children by a former venture were an eternal plague upon her spirits ; one had so much ready cash, that she was always in care how to bestow it with the least hazard, and most advantage ; another was perplexed for want of it, and the exigencies to which persons in that misfortune are reduced. Few there were to whom she could apply with any hope of success, if it were really truth what the predictor had endeavoured to make her believe : but among the number of those was a lady whose name was Anziana ; she was married to one of the chief of the nobility, a man scarce to be equalled for his personal charms, or the improvements of education ; and one who, both before and after his marriage, had given a thousand testimonies of the most tender regard for her : never did any pair appear to live together in a more perfect harmony ; three fine sons and two beautiful daughters were the product of their loves, all lovely, all hopeful, and promising a future age of happiness to their glad parents. Where could contentment dwell, if not in such a family ? Who can be completely blest, if Anziana was not ? To her therefore it was that she resolved to have recourse, and doubted not but to receive from her friendship that favour which she imagined was in her power to grant.

In pursuance of this design, she again set herself at her long neglected toilet, and resumed those ornaments which till now she had not worn since the loss of her dear son ; and when dressed with all her former exactness, went to the house of Anziana, where she was received by that lady with all the demonstrations imaginable of a sincere friendship ; but when she related to her the errand on which she came, she looked extremely surprized, and would fain have persuaded her from giving any adherence to advice which seemed so perfectly chimerical ; but the other continuing to insist on it, and
appearing

appearing somewhat resentful that she should refuse so small a trouble, when it would do her so great a piece of service; at last she consented to make the trial, on condition she would remain in her house for the space of eight days: at the end of which time, said she, if you perceive nothing which may render me incapable of serving you in the way you mention, I shall willingly undertake it. The sorrowful mother could not but comply with so reasonable a request, and in doing so, found every thing agreeable to that character of perfect tranquillity, to which the prognosticator had directed her. She now no longer doubted but she should be able to make the experiment, if there were any dependance to be placed in the words of these soothsayers. Never had she beheld a family better managed; every thing was done with that ease, that regularity, and concord, that business was a pleasure: the servants seemed to obey more through love than fear, the mistress had not the trouble of commanding; so ready were they to observe her very looks and motions, that what she would have done, was so before her desire could form itself into words: the children observed the same decorum; but these were petty felicities compared with that which flowed from a conjugal affection, so tender, so obliging, so ardent, and unchangeable, as that appeared to be between Anziana and her husband count Caprera: never were endearments carried to a higher pitch, nor had more the look of sincerity. In fine, all that can be conceived of felicity was theirs, and was thought an exception to that general rule, that perfect happiness is not to be found on earth.

The time prefixed by Anziana being elapsed, her distressed visitor entreated the performance of her promise; to which the other, in a melancholy accent, thus replied: Alas! said she, how liable are we to be deceived by appearances! How little does the outward show demonstrate, sometimes, the real disposition of the heart! I, who seem the most fortunate of my sex, am indeed
the

the most wretched ; nor is it in the power of fate to load me with superior ills. But to ease the amazement in which my words have involved you, follow me, and you shall be informed in full of the whole dismal cause. As she spoke this, she turned hastily towards the door of the chamber, and the other going after her as she had desired, they passed through several rooms, till they came to a long gallery, at the end of which was a closet. There Anziana stopped, and taking a key out of her pocket, opened it, and went in, desiring the other to do the same : but with what horror and affright was her soul invaded, when, as soon as she entered, the first object that presented itself to her, was the skeleton of a man, with arms extended wide, as if in act to seize the adventurous gazer, and on the breast was fixed a label ; which, as soon as she was enough recovered from that terror which so unexpected and so shocking a sight had plunged her in, to be able to look upon, Anziana took her by the hand, and bringing her nearer, shewed it her, containing these words, which to make them yet more dreadful, were writ in blood.

“ Remember, Anziana, it is for your crime that I am thus ; and let a just contrition take up your ensuing days, and peace be ever a stranger to your soul, till you become as I am ! ”

Let the reader imagine himself in this lady's place, and he will then be able to conceive some part of that astonishment she was in at beholding an object of this dire nature, in a house where nothing but mirth and cheerfulness appeared to reign : to describe it, is not in the power of language ; therefore, I shall only say, that it took from her the power of speech ; and though she passionately longed for the explanation of so strange an adventure, yet her tongue refused to obey the dictates of her heart ; and by the wild confusion of her looks, and eyes half starting from their spheres, alone it was that she could make known her wonder, or her curiosity :

curiosity; but Anziana perfectly understanding what it was she desired, made her turn from that ungrateful object, and sit down by her on a couch some distance from it, where she began thus: Had I not been convinced of your discretion, said she, I should not have taken this method to shew how improper a person I am to undertake the task you came hither to employ me in: I will therefore exact no promises from you of preserving my secret, nor desire any other security for it than your own honour; but as I have begun with bringing you into this closet, which, since thus furnished, has never been entered by any but myself, I will proceed to reveal by what strange means this dreadful guest was harboured here: but because I cannot do it clearly, without going back to some passages of the former part of my life, you must excuse the length of my narration; which will at least be of this service to you, that your own woes will fit more lightly on you, when you shall know how infinitely more heavy those are under which I labour. These words drew a flood of tears from her to whom they were addressed, as thinking it impossible for any misfortune to exceed that which she sustained; but composing herself as well as she could, she prepared to give attention to what the other was about to say, who immediately began the relation she had promised in these terms.

THE HISTORY OF ANZIANA, SIGNIOR LORENZO, AND COUNT CAPRERA.

IT is not unknown to you, said she, that I am descended from one of the best families in this republic, and that I had a fortune equal to my birth; I shall therefore pass over in silence the years of my
 Vol. II. I childhood,

childhood, nothing happening to me worthy of remark, till my fourteenth year : at which time, many there were who solicited me for marriage ; among the number of whom was Signior Lorenzo, a young gentleman whose equal yet I never saw, nor can believe the whole world can produce. At first, the deference I paid him I thought only was owing to his merit, and that all who knew him treated him with the same. But, alas ! too soon I found my admiration proceeded from a softer motive, and that it was love that made me so quick-sighted to his perfections ; and had sense enough to distinguish, that though he was infinitely deserving, I saw all his graces through a magnifying glass, and adored what others but approved : the infancy of love, however, affords too much pleasure to a youthful heart for the efforts of reason to be able to repel it. I suffered the sweet enchantment to grow upon me, till it overwhelmed and sunk all other considerations ; and never reflecting on the difficulties which might arise to separate us, indulged the dear delight his society afforded ; and while I listened to his vows, knew neither fear nor grief : yet had I been capable of thought, how easy had it been to me, to have foreseen my father would not look on Lorenzo with my eyes, and that all his accomplishments would not have been sufficient to make up for the disparity of his birth and fortune ! All at once, therefore, did my misfortune come upon me ; and when I was arrived at the utmost extreme of passion, did I receive a command to check it, from his mouth whence there was no appeal : in fine, just as Lorenzo had obtained my permission to demand me of my father, did he order me to see him no more ; and severely reprimanded me for having given any encouragement to his addresses. I durst not but promise to obey, though Heaven knows how little my heart was capable of making good my words : now did I begin to find there were bitters enough in love to empoison all the sweets of it ; but the disease had spread

spread too far to hope a cure ; nor indeed did I endeavour at it. I apprized Lorenzo, by letter, of what had happened, and appointed to meet him the next day at the house of a person whom I made the confidant of this affair. He failed not to come ; and instead of fulfilling the dictates of my duty in taking an eternal leave of him, I suffered myself to be swayed wholly by those of my love, and entered into the most solemn obligation that vows could form, never to be but his. That ceremony which is called Marriage, is infinitely less binding than the repeated oaths I kneeling made, and the curses I imprecated on myself if ever I swerved from them : death itself was not to dissolve the contract ; but the survivor swore to pay the same regard to the memory of the deceased as when living, and in a condition to know and to return those proofs of fidelity. Not long after this, my father unhappily incurred the displeasure of the senate to so high a degree, that he stood in need of all the interest he had, to preserve his estate from being forfeited, and himself sent into banishment : of all the friends that appeared for him, count Caprera was the most serviceable ; and indeed it was wholly owing to his great power, and steady adherence to the cause he had espoused, that my father was acquitted. So important a service required the most grateful retributions ; nor was my father deficient in paying them : he offered him the half of that estate he had preserved ; but he would accept no other recompence than Anziana : he declared himself possessor of the most violent passion for me, and that he had been prevented from discovering it but by the apprehensions of his unworthiness, till the lucky opportunity offered of conferring an obligation on my family, which, as he said, might give some pretence to hope he should not be refused. Had my father never experienced his friendship, it is highly improbable there would have been any occasion for such a fear ; the count, I must acknowledge, notwithstanding the little effect his charms

have been able to work on me, being possess of every advantage that can make marriage pleasing. But there is an awe which accompanies true affection, and indeed is often fatal to it. It was so, at least, to that the count had for me, since, had he sooner made an offering of his heart, perhaps I never should have disposed of mine to Lorenzo. Then might we have all been happy, nor would this dreadful spectacle have distracted my sight, which brings the fatal past for ever present to my tormented mind: but such was the decree of all-disposing Heaven, nor must I dare to murmur.---With these words, the swelling tears, in spite of her efforts to the contrary, burst their passage through her eyes, and she was some time before she could recover herself to prosecute her story; but when she did, it was in this manner:

My father, resumed she, was perfectly transported at this offer of the count's, and without consulting my inclination in the affair, readily promised I should be his wife, and that the marriage should be solemnized in a few days. How terrible a surprize, therefore, was it to me, when sitting one day in my chamber alone, contemplating on the perfections of my dear Lorenzo, my father entered, and informed me what I have been just now relating! I knew him positive in all his resolutions, and he expressed this on the account of the obligations he had to the count, and the honour our family would receive in an alliance with him, with an unusual warmth, and arbitrary air: I durst not utter the least syllable in opposition to what he said, but he saw enough in my countenance to make him know I was extremely dissatisfied at it. What! cried he, is it with frowns and downcast eyes that you receive the news of such a blessing? Throw off so perverse a fullness, and prepare to treat the count, who will be here this night, with that respect and gratitude which his services demand from my family; or resolve to be no more a part of it, but an alien for ever from my name and favour. Nothing can
ore certain, had I confessed the impossibility
there

there was for me to return the count's affection, and the obligations I had laid myself under to Lorenzo, than that the friendship he had for the former of them would have raised his indignation to the utmost violence against me; and fear at that time getting the better of my love, I fell at his feet, entreating his forgiveness, and assuring him of a perfect obedience; at which he appeared satisfied. But easily perceiving I was far from being so in reality, he left me to myself, believing that the best way to calm the disorders of my soul, and make it fit to receive the impression he desired. But Oh! when at liberty to give a loose to thought and to reflection, Heaven only knows the agonies I sustained; the idea of my dear Lorenzo, his passionate affection, the solemn contract we had made, the reiterated vows by which it was confirmed, came fresh into my mind, and made me for some moments resolve to endure all things, rather than make this double sacrifice of my love and faith: but then my father's power, the fear of being turned out a beggar, and the possibility that, in such a disgraced and distressful state, Lorenzo, for whose sake I should become so, might also abandon me; the miseries of poverty, and the un pitying world's contempt and censure, glared on my terrified imagination, and worked so far on the timorousness of my nature, as to counterbalance all that the softer passion could suggest, and even absolve my breach of vow. Long did I struggle in this painful conflict, and, wholly unable to determine to which of the prevailing dictates I should yield, at last a medium presented itself, which flattered me with some hope of evading the wretchedness I feared, in suffering myself to be overcome by either; it was to dissemble a contentment in the count's addresses; and, by seeming not to oppose my father's will, gain time and opportunity to disappoint it totally. When the count came, I treated him with that respect which was due to his quality, and the obligations we had received from him; nor did he expect more at his first visit from a maid of

my years; in those he afterwards made me, I discovered him to be master of so many perfections, that though my vow and inclinations bound me to Lorenzo, I could not help thinking, that I might have been infinitely happy in such a husband. In a word, I had all the esteem and friendship for him that one can have for the most amiable and deserving brother: but this was not that sort of affection he wished to inspire me with, and he could not forbear complaining of my coldness, in terms the most moving that love and wit could form. A thousand times have I been about to let him into the secret of my soul, and generously confess, that I had unwarily bestowed my heart and faith before I knew the honour he intended me; had I done so, I might have saved that dreadful scene which too soon ensued. But shame, and the fear of being exposed to the indignation of my father, or rather my ill genius, would not suffer me to make this declaration, which alone could have been of service. For often since has count Caprera protested to me in the most solemn manner, that had he known the true state of my heart, he would have desisted his suit, and chose rather to have been unhappy himself, than have made me so by an enforced marriage. But he, alas! was far from guessing at the truth, nor had I power to inform him. But it was not so with my father. He had intelligence of the private meetings I still had with Lorenzo, and doubted not but it was the violence of my affection for him, that made me receive the addresses of the count with so little pleasure. I had till now prevailed on him to defer our marriage, under the pretence that time might make me enter into it with less reluctance. But he was no longer to be put off by these excuses; he knew too well my secret, and was resolved to disappoint whatever intentions I might have in favour of my passion. Coming one morning into my chamber with a sternness in his air and countenance, which, before he spoke, gave me to understand some part of my misfortune: Anziana, said he,

he, your tears, and pretended aversion for marriage, have hitherto persuaded me to delay the performance of that promise I long since made to count Caprera; but I am now too well informed of the reasons which have made you blind to that happiness Heaven offers you in a husband of his quality and merit, and am determined that this day shall be the last of your continuing in a virgin state; or if you refuse to obey me, of being called my daughter. Chuse, therefore, either to be the most fortunate and envied woman in Venice by marrying with this nobleman, or quit my house, my name, and fight for ever, and become the most accurst, abandoned, despised, and wretched of your sex. It was to no purpose that I threw myself at his feet, entreated, wept, almost died before him. No rocks were more immovable than his relentless breast; nor could all my prayers, my tears, my swoonings, obtain even one day more: as soon as he was gone out of the room, I sent my woman, who was privy to my most secret thoughts, in search of Lorenzo, to whom I ordered her to relate the whole truth of what had passed; resolving, if he gave any encouragement to my elopement, to leave my father's house, and dare all the miseries he had threatened me with, rather than become false to my love and vows; but, unfortunately for both, he was gone that morning to the house of a relation, who lived at a good distance from Venice, and had sent for him on some extraordinary business. What could I now do? To whom could I have recourse? or what security for protection from the insults of a barbarous world? Much had I heard of the inconstancy and thanklessness of faithless men, and how could I be sure Lorenzo was not one of those? That peace of mind which I must forfeit in marrying with the count, I looked on as a trifle, when compared with the loss of my reputation, and the want of the necessaries of life: and as for the faith I had vowed to Lorenzo, I doubted not but the necessity I was under would excuse me from a breach of it. I loved the one indeed

with an unquenchable affection, and had but a bare esteem for the other; it was therefore the utmost violence to my inclinations, even but to think of complying with my father's commands; but as I could foresee nothing but misery in refusing, I was at last determined to do as he would have me; and to that end sent my woman to him, hearing he was in his closet, to let him know I was ready to obey him. But, alas! she was no sooner departed with the message, than the idea of that dear loved youth rose with its charms in my tormented soul, upbraiding me with perjury and ingratitude, levity and cowardice of nature; methought I saw him dying with despair, and crying out to Heaven to revenge his wrongs. Fully possessed with this imagination, I was about to call my woman back, and, true to love, despise all other ills: as I was rising from my chair with this intention, a book fell from the shelf; some accident happened to shake it just upon my head; which opening, I saw had the title of *L'Inconstance d'Amour*, a little French novel, which I remembered to have read some time before, and that it contained several little histories of the ingratitude of mankind, and the little they thought themselves obliged, even from the greatest condescensions our sex could make: I looked on this accident as a kind of warning to me, not to trust too much to their honour, and instead of pursuing my design, began to read in it; where the first story I happened to cast my eyes on, was a kind of parallel with my own; it being of a young lady who had forsook her father, friends and country, for the dear sake of love; yet had no sooner reduced herself to that extremity which the want of them must infallibly draw on, than the ungrateful wretch, for whom she was become thus miserable, told her, he was sorry for what had befallen her, that he would be her friend as far as a few pieces, or give her a character to get a service if she were disposed to accept of one; but she could not expect he would marry a woman in her circumstances. Heavens! cried I, as I

was

was reading, should Lorenzo be of this humour, what an extravagance of wretchedness would be my portion, (and why should I hope a better fate?) who pretends to love, but says and swears as much as he has done? But put the case, continued I, after a little reflection, that he should excel his sex as much in honour, as he does in all personal perfections; what happiness could there be in such a state of obligation and dependance? Would not his friends and kindred be perpetually upbraiding him, that he had married a woman without any other dowry than her love? Would not my clothes, nay my very meat, be cavilled at, as too extravagant? I cannot bear the thought, cried I again, and will pursue my resolution. It is reason bids me, and all the softening follies of my inclinations fly before his force. I was thus debating within myself, when my woman returned, and told me, my father was infinitely pleased with my return to duty, and had sent me, to grace the ceremony he was preparing to solemnize that night, a string of diamonds for my neck, of a vast largeness, and the most glorious lustre I had ever seen. I was all my life a great admirer of fine things; and as it was merely the fear of being obliged to live without them, that had made me yield to marry the count; so this addition to those my father's indulgence had before bestowed on me, greatly strengthened me in that resolution. To make it yet more firm, the count sent me by his gentleman a bracelet of pearl, which an ancestor of his had taken from the Turks, and was the most orient and richest of any in the republic. To add to all these baits, several relations, whom my father had invited to be present at the marriage, seemed, the whole day, each to endeavour to outvie the other in praising count Caprera. His wit, his elegance of behaviour, his fine shape, the delicacy of his complexion, the gracefulness of his air, his good-humour, honour, generosity, the greatness of his family, and the immense sums of money his father had left him in possession of,

were the only topics of conversation ; and all agreed, that I could not but be extremely blest in such a husband. Betwixt the variety of company and discourse, my spirits were so much hurried, that I had no leisure for reflection ; and Lorenzo was either not remembered, or in such a manner as to be no hindrance to the completing the wishes of his rival. We were married about eight at night by my father's chaplain, and after a magnificent colation put to bed. But here, what the noise and bustle of the day repelled, the silence of the night called back ; not Caprera, but Lorenzo, was now the subject of my meditations, and it was in vain that that obliging husband repeated the vow he had given before the priest in a more soft and endearing manner, than those who had the ordering of the ceremony had ever tenderness enough to form ; the absent lover took up all my thoughts ; and that reluctance with which I suffered his embraces, was not, as he then imagined, owing to a virgin bashfulness, but to the ardency of my wishes for another. I now found that love had not lost the least ground in my heart, and having but by the extremity of my fear, been compelled a while to screen its influence, those fears removed, blazed out again with the same violence as ever. Never was there a more unhappy bride. The night I past in tears, and early in the morning I forsook my bed, in spite of the count's endeavours to detain me ; and going into my closet with my favourite woman, disburthened some part of the heavy anguish of my soul in complaints : fain would I have written to Lorenzo, to acquaint him with what I had been compelled to do, and entreat his pardon for my breach of vow ; but could not venture to do it while he remained at so great a distance, not thinking it safe to trust a letter of that consequence to the post. With the utmost impatience I longed for his return, flattering myself that I should be more at ease, when he should let me know he had forgiven my involuntary crime. In languishments unbecoming the character of a wife,
though

though then I thought them innocent, did I linger out the days of his absence; the count and my father omitting nothing which they thought might bring me into a better humour; though the latter of them, whenever he was alone, did not fail to tell me, that he was not unacquainted with the motive of my disgust, and that if balsams failed to work, corrosives hereafter should be applied. But neither threats nor persuasions were of any effect to make me alter my manner of behaviour; and it is most certain, that had not the count loved me to a very great degree of tenderness, he must have hated and despised me for my ingratitude, and forgetfulness of the station to which he had raised me.

At length my fatal wishes had success, Lorenzo returned to Venice; which I no sooner was informed of, then I sent my confidante to him with a letter which contained these lines.

“ IT is needless to tell you, that I have put count
 “ Caprera in possession of that title which ought only to
 “ be yours. I doubt not but you are already suffi-
 “ ciently informed of my seeming guilt; but of my real
 “ innocence you are not, you cannot yet be sensible.
 “ You know not with what severities I was threatened
 “ by a barbarous and inexorable father, nor can you
 “ guess how terrible was the conflict I endured betwixt
 “ love and duty; be assured, you never were dearer
 “ than at that moment when I gave myself for ever
 “ from you, nor can the name of Caprera make any
 “ change in my sentiments; I am Anziana still. Fate,
 “ cruel fate, has disposed my person to another, but
 “ the better part of me, my soul, is ever yours. Oh!
 “ then forgive what it was impossible to avoid, with-
 “ out being driven to extremities, such as would have
 “ made me despair of retaining your affections, the
 “ only thing I ever hoped, the only thing I ever feared;
 “ yes, you must pardon me, must pity, and must love
 “ me too; nor can I think that with a crime against
 “ him

" him to whom compulsion, not inclination, gave my
 " hand ; but were it so, it is here excused by the ne-
 " cessity. I have been so much accustomed to proofs of
 " your affection, that they make a part of my life, and
 " when they cease, the other must infallibly be at an
 " end : I believe it not impossible to contrive a meeting
 " with you ; if so, I charge you, do not fail to come.
 " I am distracted till I see you, and receive that con-
 " solation in my misfortunes, which it is in your power
 " to afford to the unhappy, but not inconstant

" ANZIANA.

" P. S. Write to me by the bearer, consider op-
 " portunities of this kind are now become scarce ; and
 " if you can think of any means to see me, more easy
 " to be accomplished than I have yet been able to hit
 " upon, communicate them to this faithful girl, who
 " knows, as well as I, the restraint I labour under, not
 " by the observance of a husband, but a jealous father."

I ought to blush, continued Anziana, in repeating
 to you the contents of this letter, which are indeed of
 such a nature, as might make the least censorious be-
 lieve, I had a meaning in them very different from that
 virtue I profess ; but I protest to you, with the same
 sincerity as I shall answer Heaven, that I was wholly
 free from any thought of ill ; I longed indeed to see
 him ; I passionately desired that he would continue to love
 me ; and how far I might have been prevailed on by that
 desire and his entreaty, had I been permitted to in-
 dulse it in frequent conversations with him, I cannot,
 dare not to answer ; but fate thought it sufficient to
 make me miserable without rendering me vicious also,
 and contented with the sacrifice I had made of my peace,
 suffered me not to resign my virtue.

He received my letter not with the transports of rage
 which I expected ; and whatever discontents the news
 of my marriage had occasioned, they were more than
 balanced

balanced by the pleasure he took in the willingness I expressed of continuing a correspondence with him. The person whom I sent to him was a woman of an excellent penetration; and she assured me, in terms as plain as the station she was in would permit her to do to a mistress, that Lorenzo was not that disinterested lover we had believed him to be: she forbore, however, to express what it was she thought of him, till I had read his letter, the contents whereof are written in my heart, and never can be forgot; they were in this manner:

“ THOUGH I might justly enough complain of
 “ your want of faith in my repeated assurances, that no
 “ change of circumstances should have the power to
 “ alter that indelible affection I had vowed; yet to
 “ prove how much beyond my own I prize your interest, I wish you all the happiness the marriage-bed
 “ can yield: nor do I envy Caprera the possession of your
 “ person, since you so transportingly assure me, that
 “ your heart is mine. You have been accustomed to
 “ utter nothing but sacred truth; if this is so, I should
 “ be the most unreasonable and ungrateful of my sex,
 “ not to be highly satisfied with my condition; for
 “ what may not the happy he, who rules the heart,
 “ command! I have been talking to your obliging
 “ messenger, and she thinks it not impossible that I
 “ might be admitted into your own house late at
 “ night, when all the family are in bed; you pretending an indisposition, to avoid lying with the
 “ count ——. I mention this method as the most
 “ safe one for your reputation; for though, doubtless,
 “ either of us would be welcome alone at our usual
 “ rendezvous; yet as you know they are people of a
 “ scrupulous virtue, and we used to meet on other terms
 “ than now we can be supposed to do, they might think
 “ the liberty they allowed me with Anziana a fault, if
 “ indulged with the wife of count Caprera: it will be
 “ just the same, if seen together in any other place. I
 “ see

“ see no hazard of discovery at your own house ; but
 “ if by any unexpected means such a misfortune should
 “ arrive, be assured of my inviolable integrity, and that
 “ I would sooner lose my life than confess I came thither
 “ with your knowledge ; or had any entertainment from
 “ you, but such as drove me to despair. I would have
 “ you consider of it, however ; and if you approve of
 “ this proceeding, let me know the time and hour
 “ when I may hope to seize my own, and triumph over
 “ him, who has but by force made himself master of
 “ the right of

“ The ever faithful, and

“ passionately devoted

“ LORENZO.

“ P. S. You must extremely wrong the passion you
 “ have inspired, if you believe not I shall attend a
 “ second mandate with the extreme patience. Re-
 “ member that it is your part, not mine, to pity ; and
 “ I expect you to show a bright example, how much
 “ you dare for love and gratitude.”

It is impossible to express what it was I felt at reading this letter ; never had I before experienced such an astonishment ; such a shock.---What means he, cried I out, as soon as I came to the conclusion, by integrity, seizing his own, and triumphing over him who by force is become master of his right ? He talks as if I had invited him to wrong the count, and had no other notion of continuing a conversation with him, than to carry on a shameful intrigue. Heaven ! how have I been deceived in the disposition of this man ! I thought he loved me with so pure a flame, that sensual enjoyment never was thought on by him ; but now I find his wishes had no other aim ; and flattered by the mistaken kindness of my letter, he imagines there wants only an opportunity to gratify them ; and believes I am a prostitute in my nature, and that the vilest passion has
 dominion

dominion over my soul. I could not, for some time, enough compose myself, to hear what my woman had to say ; but when she spoke, it was as I before informed you ; and intimating, that he expected nothing less than to possess me with the same freedom, as he would have been allowed to do, were he in count Caprera's place, I was in the utmost rage with myself, for having written in a manner to give room for such a thought : but as my designs were wholly innocent, and meant no more than to convert the love we had bore each other into as ardent a friendship, I was ashamed to think I had so much tenderness for a man of so low and groveling a soul, and who now appeared to know no more of love than the meanest part of it, that which the difference of sex excites. I despised him so heartily, that I know not if what I felt for him, for some moments, might not be called loathing : my woman, ever faithful to my interest and fame, failed not to say every thing in her power to heighten this disgust ; fain would she have persuaded me to send to him no more ; or if I did, to write in such a manner as should convince him of the error he had been in, and make him ashamed ever to see me more. But this advice did not relish with me, I still persisted in my intention of seeing him ; whatever hazard I ran ; I fancied I could make a proselyte of him ; and was pleased to think, how great a glory it would be to convert this gross and sooty flame into one all pure and elemental. The love of souls I aimed to inspire, that so we might enjoy a noble, disinterested, and platonic friendship. This, as far as I can be judge of my own heart, was my design ; how far it would have succeeded, Heaven only knows, for I was, in a fatal manner, prevented from making the experiment. But to proceed gradually with my story, after the consideration of about a week, I writ to him in these terms :

“ That I answered yours no sooner, was owing to the
“ uncertainty I was in, in what manner I should do it ;
“ and

“ and I know not, if Virtue will not be offended, that
“ I hold any correspondence with a man, whose designs
“ appear to be so much the reverse of those inspired by
“ her. For Heaven’s sake, what has emboldened you
“ to hope, from the wife of count Caprera, what you
“ never dared to ask from Anziana? If judging of your
“ innocence by my own, I desired the continuance of
“ your friendship; which of my past actions have given
“ you cause to make so vile a construction of my mean-
“ ing? How could you dare suspect me guilty of a
“ dishonourable thought? I told you, indeed, that I
“ was still your lover, but it was with such a kind of
“ love that I regarded you, as angels pay to each other
“ in the realms of bliss; all pure and intellectual, free
“ from all gross desires or earthly appetite. If I look
“ on the breach of my vow to you as a crime, which,
“ though enforced, requires my whole life’s penitence
“ to atone; how can you think I would voluntarily
“ violate that I have made to count Caprera before the
“ holy priest? Such love as a chaste brother may to a
“ sister give, I shall rejoice to find from you; and such,
“ and no other, can I pay to you. If you think this
“ worthy your acceptance, and that we can converse to-
“ gether in such a manner as to have nothing to ap-
“ prehend from our own consciences, we shall be the
“ better enabled to condemn what the world may say
“ of us, should our conversation be discovered; though
“ not to give occasion for censure, I will contrive
“ to keep it as private as possible. Send me word,
“ after you have well examined the nature of your de-
“ sires, if you can restrain them within the limits I
“ prescribe, and you shall see with what speed I will
“ meet the lover of my soul. But endeavour not to
“ deceive yourself or me; pretend not to be what you
“ are not, nor imagine I do so; or that I am, or ever
“ will be, one step beyond what honour will permit,

“ Your lover, or your friend,

“ ANZIANA.

“ P. S. Burn

“ P. S. Burn my letters, as I do yours the moment I receive them ; but lay the contents of this up in your heart ; that if you swerve in any point from the injunction it lays you under, you may not plead forgetfulness. Adieu ! As you persevere in virtue you shall continue to be dear to me.”

Fool that I was, and vain of the power of my own persuasion, I doubted not but this letter would make a convert of him, and longed for my messenger's return, which I was perfectly assured in my mind would bring me an answer such as I wished ; nor was I greatly deceived : he had too much of the artifice of his sex in him to contradict what I said, till he had an opportunity to benefit himself by it ; at least I judge so by what I have since been told : the contents of what he wrote ran thus :

“ VIRTUE, fair angel ! has many branches, nor is chastity always the most shining one it bears ; gratitude and compassion are allowed to be the prime graces of humanity ; and when opposed to these, the other degenerates to a vice. Is it to be of a piece with Heaven, to destroy the man who adores you, to inflict curses where blessings are implored ; and be cruel to a wretch who throws himself upon your mercy ? Oh consider, Anziana ! nor let a too strict adherence to one virtue make you become guilty of injuring all the others. Even justice too you forfeit, since you were mine before you were Caprera's : how often, dear perjured beauty ! have you called Heaven and every saint to witness ; that you never would be another's ! and if compelled by arbitrary power to falsify those vows, must you also join in the wrong ? You might be forced into the arms of the count, but by your own will are only debarred from mine. I solicit you, therefore, not to an act of shame, but
“ justice :

" justice: I will, however, insist no farther on this
 " theme till I have the blessing of your presence; if
 " what I have then to say proves ineffectual, I will be
 " dumb for ever on it. On this you may depend,
 " that I shall never have recourse to violence; and if
 " unable to convince you, that what I ask is not a
 " crime to grant, would not receive it on any terms,
 " which, to reflect on hereafter, might give you dis-
 " content, or the least shadow of remorse. Believe
 " me, that your peace of mind is of infinite more
 " value to me than my own; and that if it can be
 " preserved by no other means, than relinquishing
 " those hopes to which our contract had given me a
 " pretence, will make a sacrifice of them, and confine
 " myself hereafter to the bounds you set, however
 " painful or fatal they may prove. You are the
 " mistress of my soul; all its faculties are at your de-
 " votion, and to be directed by you; dispose, there-
 " fore, as you please, of

" Your ever faithful

" And most obedient slave,

" LORENZO."

Though the beginning of this letter gave me some
 uneasiness, the latter part of it entirely dissipated it;
 and I rested assured, that he would be indeed as con-
 formable to my will as he had promised, and resolved
 to give him a meeting as soon as I could contrive
 the means. I considered on what he had proposed, and
 I found nothing in it but what was safe enough; but
 the tenderness the count had for me would not suffer it
 to succeed; for when I feigned an indisposition, and
 desired to sleep in my own bed, that indulgent husband
 would needs quit his also, and watch by me: but a
 small time presented me with an opportunity more
 ample than I could have hoped. Some disturbance
 happening among the tenants on our land in the coun-
 try, my father was obliged to go thither in person;

he

he desired count Caprera to accompany him, believing his presence, who in the right of me was to be their future lord, might be of service on this occasion. He would not refuse my father, and thinking the journey might be too great a fatigue to me, being then great with child, they departed, and I was left at full liberty to do as I pleased. They had no sooner left the house, than I took pen and paper, and wrote to Lorenzo in these terms :

“ THE long-wished moment is at last arrived ; my
 “ father and husband, those diligent observers of my
 “ every action, are both removed ; and before they can
 “ return, I shall have many opportunities to perfect the
 “ work I have begun. This night, about twelve,
 “ the family will be all in bed, all but myself and
 “ faithful maid, who will attend to admit you. Re-
 “ member the conditions on which I grant this liberty,
 “ and give me no cause, as you say, hereafter to re-
 “ pent my condescension. Yours,

“ ANZIANA.

“ P. S. A gentle rap against the window-shutter
 “ shall be the sign ; take care that there are no pas-
 “ sengers in the street when you make it. ’Till then,
 “ farewell.”

I dispatched my woman with this, with a haste and impatience which was not usual with me ; and might, therefore, have served as an omen of its fatality, had I been capable of reflecting on it. She discharged her trust with her ordinary fidelity, and was returning to me with an answer, when my father and the count, having met with some company in the street, which had delayed their taking horse, were just passing by the house of Lorenzo, that ill-starred moment as she came out of it. The former of them knowing well who it was that dwelt there, and fired with a jealousy of the honour

honour of his family, caught hold of her, and bid her make no disturbance, but go along with him. The terror and surprize she was in would not suffer her to have presence enough of mind to form any excuse, if there had been a possibility of making one for such a visit; and a house being near, over the master of which my father had an influence, he thrust her in: my husband followed, but was too much overwhelmed with wonder to ask the meaning of what he saw, 'till my father eased him of it, by calling the poor trembling wench all the opprobrious names his fury could invent; such as the bawd of her mistress's shame, and witness of her dishonour; and not doubting but she had some letter about her, searching for it, he immediately found one in her bosom, which contained enough to make him imagine himself confirmed in the truth of what he feared. I have had it too often repeated to be capable of forgetting it; the words were these:

“ TO go about to inform you of the raptures with
 “ which I received yours, would be as vain an endeavour
 “ as it is to represent my impatience for that dear hour,
 “ which is to put me in possession of a blessing I have so
 “ long languished for. To think that I shall see An-
 “ ziana again, and be permitted to converse with her
 “ as I have done when no curst ties made her ano-
 “ ther's right, is such a profusion, such an extrava-
 “ gance of delight, as is almost fatal to me; and I
 “ have scarce breath to speak my thanks. But our kind
 “ confidante, who sees my transports, will be better
 “ able to make a description of them, than all I can
 “ say. Depend on every thing, thou sovereign of my
 “ soul! that you would wish to find in

“ The most faithful, and most

“ obsequious of mankind,

“ LORENZO.”

This

This did my father read aloud to the count; and by what I have told you of his passion for me, it is easy for you to guess into what an excess of jealous rage it must transport him. There was all the room in the world for him to believe I was carrying on an intrigue, the most dishonourable that could be; he knew not the conditions on which I had consented to admit him; and I cannot, without being guilty of partiality, but confess that there was a warmth in this letter, which had no affinity with platonic love. It is difficult to say, whether my father or husband were now most incensed against me, or which formed the most cruel stratagems of revenge on him by whom they imagined themselves injured and affronted; but between them, there was one contrived, which I know not if any age can parallel, and I am sure none can exceed: They ordered my woman to be fast bound, and locked in an upper room; having first, with their drawn daggers at her throat, compelled her to write a billet to me, containing these lines:

“ AN accident, such as will take up more time
 “ than I can now afford to relate, takes me from the
 “ honour of your service. It may be long before I
 “ enjoy the happiness of returning. I send this, there-
 “ fore, to let you know, I delivered the letter you
 “ entrusted me with, safe into the hands of Signior
 “ Lorenzo, who cannot enjoy the blessing you would
 “ bestow on him; this night being, as he says, obliged
 “ to attend the issue of an affair on which his life de-
 “ pends. I wish you could be able to forget him
 “ entirely, or think on him but as a man unworthy of
 “ your favour. I am, with all respect and duty,

“ Your Ladyship’s

“ most devoted and faithful servant,

“ LAWANA.”

It

It was to no purpose that this poor creature attested my innocence, by all the asseverations she was capable of making; it appeared evident to them, that if I had not already been guilty in fact, I intended to be so that night; and therefore leaving her in the house where they had first carried her, they went to the place where their attendants waited with the horses; they ordered them to pursue their journey, telling them, they would overtake them the next day. This being done, they concealed themselves in the skirts of the town where they were not known, till the approach of night; when, disguised and muffled in their cloaks, they returned, and waited at the end of a back lane, through which they knew Lorenzo must be obliged to pass; and as soon as they saw him, without giving him the least warning of his fate, plunged both their daggers in his breast, on which he immediately fell: the place being extremely private; gave them no apprehensions of any person coming along, and they tarried by the dead body, till some men, whom they had ordered at that hour, came and joined them, and carried it to the house of a surgeon, who had been brought up in the family of count Caprera, and was entirely at his devotion. Revenge not satiated even with the death of the supposed offender, this cruel husband and father pursued it farther yet, denying the rites of burial to the lifeless bones, which they ordered to be clean scraped, and disrobed of all their flesh, and then set up in the manner you see. For that, oh Miramillia! continued she, pointing to the anatomy, that dreadful spectacle was the once gay, admired Lorenzo.

Here the bursting grief broke in a second time on her discourse, and she was compelled to give some time to it before she could proceed; which at last she did in these words:

Little was I capable of guessing what had happened, yet was I seized with a strange disorder at the receipt of Lawrana's billet; and when afterward I was told by
some,

some, who little imagined how nearly I was interested in the news, that Lorenzo was absconded none knew where, I was not without feeling some jealous pangs: it entered into my head, that my woman had subverted me in his esteem; and the remonstrances she had daily given me, not to indulge too far the tenderness I had for him, confirmed me in that opinion. The girl was young, well bred, had a great deal of wit, and a more than ordinary share of beauty; and to have them both missing at the same time, gave a kind of reason for this conjecture. The letter she had wrote to me, took from me all suspicion of the truth; and it never once came into my thoughts, that what had passed between us, had reached either my father or my husband; but if it had, the letters which I received from them every post, would have dispelled such an imagination; both writing to me with a tenderness which I could not have expected from them, had I believed they had been sensible of my conduct. It was, it seems, the advice of count Caprera, that they should dissemble with me in this manner, till the time of my delivery, which now drew near, was arrived. At their return to Venice, nothing could I read in either of their countenances, which could give me cause to think they were displeased with me; and the indulgence they shewed me, with the supposed infidelity of Lorenzo, by degrees abating the passion I had for him, I grew perfectly tranquil and easy in my mind. Oh! had I never been undeceived, I had been happy; but the hour which was to make me a mother being come, how prodigiously was I alarmed, when I saw my husband and my father enter the chamber, leading between them a priest, who had formerly been my confessor, but had of late been absent on a foreign visitation: the women being desired to withdraw into another room, he began to talk to me of the duties of confession, and the little hope there was of finding mercy at the eternal judgment-seat, for any person who left this world without having

having first received absolution from those whose business it was to give it; which, as he said, could not be done without revealing all the remembered transgressions of our lives. You are now in a condition, continued he, which brings death so near you, that the eternal dart hangs over your head, waiting but the Almighty's word to strike you to the center. Beware, then, that you have not yet some undiscovered sin which hangs upon your conscience, nor let shame, or fear of what any mortal power can do, prevail on you to hide it. Speak, and be forgiven; or dying in silence, expect no mercy. He said much more to the same purpose, I being too much disordered, between pain and wonder, to reply; but when by repeated abjurations urged to speak, I assured him, that I had nothing to reveal, but what I had already confessed to him, who was my spiritual director. But that is not sufficient, cried my father sternly; a vast estate depends on the heir you are about to bring into the world, and must not be the portion of a spurious race; answer with the same truth, as you must do at that dread Tribunal, where, perhaps, you may in a few moments appear, if it be to your husband, count Caprera, that the production of this yet unborn is owing; and if no other man has ever prevailed on the weakness of your sex, in prejudice of your honour and your vow. The surprize I had been in to what this visit tended, now gave way to an adequate rage, when I found it was occasioned by jealousy. What! cried I, am I suspected and taxed, in this cruel manner, of a crime my soul abhors? Ungrateful man! pursued I, turning to the count, since thou couldst think me false, believe me still so; nor can I do less than inflict the punishment of doubt for such a wrong. So great was my fury at that time, that I believe, though my father protested the women should not come in to my assistance till I had made a more positive answer to the question proposed to me, I should rather have chosen death, than have given the satisfaction they required, if the interest
of

of my child, who they both swore should be an outcast as soon as born, had not prevailed on me; and I at length gave my oath, that never had I yielded to the rites of love but with the count my husband. This done, they left me, and the women were permitted to come in; but I was so disordered with the late treatment I had received, that it very much increased the danger of my condition, and my life was despaired of by every body in the room. I was, however, at last delivered of the eldest of those sons you see here: but never mother less rejoiced in being so. Instead of the congratulations I expected from a father and a husband, and those obliging tenderesses for which women chearfully go through that dreadful moment, mine regarded me but with frowns, and sullen discontent, civil to me but when other company was present. It is certain, that whatever people may pretend, grief, without the assistance of some other disease, will never kill; it may by degrees consume the spirits, and decay the body, but not destroy it immediately, else had not I survived the treatment I then endured; much less that which soon after was my lot. The count, who to that spirit of revenge, which is natural to the Italians in general, had a more than ordinary share of it in his composition; and though he was now pretty well convinced I had not wronged him in fact, was certain in his own mind, that I had done so in intention, and that the other also had not been wanting, had it not been prevented by the death of Lorenzo; it was not in his power to inflict more on him. I must be the next, therefore, that felt the force of his indignation; and though the condition I had been in, had till now prevented him from letting it loose upon me, now was the time to vent the long pent-up passion of his struggling soul, and shew me, that all the love he had borne me, was not sufficient to combat with the dictates of his more prevailing resentment. I was scarce able to go out of my chamber, when he told me, he had a spectacle to present me with, which had formerly

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afforded me much satisfaction : and taking me by the hand, led me to this closet, where he had ordered the bones of the unfortunate Lorenzo to be placed as they still remain. Though I had no more than an indistinct guess at the dreadful truth ; yet an object so astonishing, so shocking, had almost deprived me of my senses, before I knew the causes I had for grief. But when he related the story, and with a barbarous pleasure dwelt on the cruel triumph he had gained, my spirits, weakened with pain and inward discontent, were grown too weak to sustain a discovery so alarming ; and I fell motionless at the feet of this vindictive husband. He made use of his utmost endeavours, indeed, to recover me ; but when he had, What exclamations did I not utter ? What did I not say of upbraiding and reproachful ? How did now all my former tenderness for Lorenzo return, and with what an extremity of detestation look upon his murderers ! The names of father and husband were too little to awe the present fury of my soul. A thousand times I cried out to them to compleat their cruelty, and send me to my dear Lorenzo ; nay, was but with the greatest care and diligence prevented from giving myself that death which they denied me. The violence of my passion, I think, abated that of the count's, and he began to treat me with more mildness ; and at last to endeavour, by all the ways he could invent, to alleviate my discontents ; but I refused to listen to any thing he said : and one time, when he was more than ordinarily assiduous about me, I flung from him, and throwing myself on the floor, made a solemn vow, that since he had brought Lorenzo to me, though not in a condition to know, or reward my constancy, no day of my ensuing life should pass, without some part of it being spent with him. For many months did I refuse either to sleep or eat with the count, whom I never called by any other title, than that of murderer, ruffian, and base assassin ; but passions, which rage with that violence mine did, are seldom of long continuance. The tenderness

derness he now resumed for me, the penitence he now express'd for what the impatience of his jealousy had made him act, at length won me to forgive him, and endeavour to compose myself. It is now ten years since this affair happened, and time, as it decays all things, has deprived my griefs of their former poignancy. In compliance with my vow, however, I devote an hour every day to the memory of Lorenzo, in this recess, which is the repository of all that now remains of him. Lawrana was, some time after the discovery, released of her confinement, and permitted to attend me as formerly: she is very often my companion in this sad employment, and we join the mournful accents of our sighs for poor Lorenzo's fate. The decorum of the world, the love I bear my children, whose interest it is I should live well with their father, oblige me to feign a forgetfulness, as much as possible, of what is past; and the real tenderness which I believe he now again feels for me, makes him omit nothing which may induce me to return it. Thus is the secret of our misfortune concealed from all who know us; you are the only person intrusted with it, and I depend wholly on your honour for the preserving it.

Here she ceased: and the other, after assuring her that she never would reveal one syllable of what she had said, told her, she was amazed how she could wear a look of so much serenity, when it could not be but that her heart must be all confusion and disorder. Custom, replied she, renders all things easy; even dissimulation, to which my nature was ever most averse, by a long habitude I am now grown perfect in; besides, it is no inconsiderable lightening to the weight of my afflictions, that I give a loose to them in this closet. My mind, disburthened of the pressing anguish by the vent I give it in tears, and in complainings here, has something of an unaffected cheerfulness when I forsake this scene of horror. You see, therefore, Miramillia, that there are woes in the world, of a nature infinitely

superior to those you labour under, and yet are undiscovered even by the most prying eyes.

They had some farther considerations on this head, after which the sorrowful mother took her leave, being well convinced it was not from Anziana that she could hope to retrieve her dear son. At her return to her own habitation, she set herself to think whom she should next address: and in a moment, running through the whole class of her acquaintance, she bethought her of a lady, who had been married very young to a gentleman she passionately loved, and was as much beloved by him; but his relations being incensed at the match, had contrived by a stratagem to send him beyond sea, to a place where he could neither write to her, nor receive any letters from her. They were separated for many years; but the person who occasioned it being called to answer in another world for the cruelty and injustice he had been guilty of in this, the bridegroom was at last returned to the longing arms of his faithful wife. The joy of such a meeting, joined to an affluence of fortune, seemed to promise Miramillia what she had been disappointed of in Anziana; and as she had been extremely intimate with her, and had comforted her in her afflictions, she doubted not but she would be as ready to receive her now in this happy reverse of her fate: she, therefore, made all imaginable haste to her house to wish her joy, and to let her know the service she believed was in her power to render her.

She was not deceived in one part of her conjecture; Isferia, for that was the name of the lady she went to visit, embraced her, and seemed infinitely obliged to her, that she added to the number of those who came to congratulate her on this fortunate turn in her affairs. Some time was taken up in discourses on ordinary matters; but Miramillia, being full of the business which had brought her thither, entreated to speak to her in private. On which, the other taking her by the hand, led

led her into a fine garden, at the upper end of which was a grotto; which entering, as soon as they were seated, the sorrowful mother began her story, and repeating the words of the fortune-teller, begged she would make a trial of his truth, by undertaking this little piece of work; for which, she told her, she could not doubt of her being qualified, since she had, in her dear husband, all that she had ever wished to be possessed of. She had no sooner concluded these words, than the other gave so deep a sigh, that the grieved Miramillia, before she spoke, was more than half convinced her search was not here to end. It is a fault, answered Iseria, to wish with too much ardency, which Heaven sometimes punishes with the utmost severity. I cannot say, but that I have found more mercy, and that I cannot call myself unhappy, while I enjoy the society of my dear Montrano, my ever loved, and ever loving husband; yet is there not a person in the world less fit to be employed in the task you mention, than myself. But lest you should suspect my friendship, I will give you a proof of it, which I intended none ever should receive from me, that of revealing to you the truth of my affairs. After which, I shall leave yourself to judge, if by my hands the enchantment you desire can possibly be wrought. The other, making no other reply to these words than a low bow, in token that she would take it as a favour, she began the narration she had promised in this manner.

THE HISTORY OF MONTRANO AND
ISERIA.

YOU know, said she, that the passion with which Montrano and myself were mutually inspired, hurried us to a private marriage, without obtaining the

consent of Polusino, the uncle of Montrano, and from whom alone he had any dependance ; his father having wasted the best part of the estate which was to descend to him on a courtezan, of whom he was so fond, that he quitted one of the best of wives in the world, and lived wholly with her. Polusino, however, had a very plentiful fortune, and having no children of his own, he declared to every body, that the young Montrano should be his heir : I, on the other hand, had but a small dowry, and that too in hands whence I could not easily call it out ; nothing, therefore, could be more unadvised, than for two people in such circumstances to join in marriage : but love is deaf to reason ; the sum of our desires being the enjoyment of each other, we looked on all the misfortunes which might arise from such an union, as nothing worthy our regard : we took all imaginable care, however, to conceal what we had done from the knowledge of Polusino ; but our caution was ineffectual, he was informed of it immediately ; and scarce two hours had we been in bed, before he broke into the house where we lay, with a great number of armed men ; who forcing Montrano to rise, tore him from my trembling arms, and bearing him away, left me in a swoon, which had like to have been fatal to me ; for the people of the house, surpris'd at what had happened, came not into the chamber for a considerable time ; but when they did, they found me on the floor, naked, cold, and in all appearance dead : they applied things proper for my recovery, however, in case there were any remains of life left in me, which, together with the natural strength of my constitution, at last brought me to myself, contrary to the expectation of all about me. I will not prolong the time by a tedious repetition of the exclamations I made ; you may believe they were excessive, and proportioned to the greatness of my misfortune. But how infinitely more wretched, even than what I feared, did I find myself, when the next morning, by break of day, I sent in search of him,

him, and heard, that the next moment to that in which he was ravished from my embraces, he was sent on board a vessel, which then lay ready to set sail, and was bound to some part of the Indies ; but which, I could not by any person be resolved ! The years of fruitless expectation, which I wasted in hope of his return, or hearing some news of him, are well known to you, who so generously visited me in that distress, and omitted no tender office of friendship to alleviate my sorrows. Seven times had the increasing sun cheered the glad husbandman and blest the fields, while all was winter and the gloom of night in my sad mind. Polusino in this time died, bequeathing his whole fortune to Montrano, if ever he could be heard of ; which clause gave a vast addition to my griefs, since till that time I had believed he had not been ignorant where it was he remained : I now doubted not but that he was dead ; men are inconstant, variable in their inclinations as the ever-changing wind, said I to myself ; but though, another object taking possession of his heart, he might forget his suffering wife, the consideration of his interest would not permit him to be remiss in his duty to his uncle. No, no, would I cry out, he is not false ! eternal truth and ever-grateful fondness have on earth no being but in his mind. But he is dead, he is dead ! and it is a prophanation of his memory, to harbour even a thought to the disadvantage of his honour or his love. I now looked on myself as a widow, wore the habit of one, and endured, perhaps, more real anguish in my heart, than the most truly disconsolate one ever had the capacity of feeling or than the most artful one had dissimulation enough to affect. Even time relieved not my affliction, my griefs seemed rather strengthened by age ; and the more I reflected on the merits of Montrano, the more I became inconsolable for his loss. I believe you are not insensible, that every body believing, as I did, that he was dead, I had many who addressed me for marriage : some of their offers appeared too

advantageous to be refused, and I was daily pressed by my friends to pitch on one of them ; but all my notions of love were dead, when I thought Montrano so ; and resolving to devote my future days entirely to his memory, as a grief I thought most just, I made a solemn vow to continue as I was : but that not being effectual to ease me of their importunities, it was my design to retire to a monastery, and was settling my little affairs that I might do so, without having any incumbrance from the world upon me, when Montrano returned. I had a maid, who had lived with me from the time that dear youth had first made his addresses to me ; and as I was sitting one day reading in my closet, she came running to me, with all the marks of the most strong amazement written on her countenance. Two gentlemen, said she, with an accent which seemed to hesitate with terror, entreat to speak with you ; one must be my Lord Montrano, or his ghost : he has his eyes, his mouth, his very shape and air, only more thin and dejected. It is certain, that this poor girl verily believed she had seen a spirit, for never did I behold a creature in such disorder ; but I had no leisure to think on the occasion of it, when he entered the closet ; guessing at the surprize I should be in, and having not patience to wait till it should permit me to come down. Iseria ! my dear Iseria ! cried he, am I again so blest to see you ? And with these words snatching me to his breast, prevented my falling on the floor, as I was ready to do, overcome with an excess of joy and wonder. This absence of mind lasted, however, but for a moment, and I again awoke to sense, to thought, and rapture. Impossible would it be, as well as impertinent, to repeat to you the welcomes I gave him, or the softness of his reiterated endearments ; there are a thousand little incoherencies in the talk of lovers, which delight beyond the expression, yet will be ridiculous when reported afterwards. The accent, the manner, is infinitely more eloquent than the words ;

and

and though love is frequently obliged to wit to make himself be known; yet wit more often is glad to have recourse to the soft follies of love, to make himself rewarded. Our mutual transports would not permit me immediately to perceive there was a strange gentleman in the room; but when I did, the confusion I was in for having so long neglected him, made me blush extremely; and the more I aimed to apologize for it, the more I found myself at a loss how to do it: but Montrano guessing at my thoughts, relieved me; and with an admirable address excused me to his friend, who I soon perceived was a man of excellent good sense and breeding; he made me, in his turn, a great many fine compliments, with which he artfully mingled some praises of Montrano. When Heaven, said he, formed a pair compleat like Montrano and the beautiful Iseria, it certainly intended them as happy as they are deserving to be so. It is, therefore, enough to make us call Omnipotence in question, and ascribe too great a power to the infernal potentate, if any misfortune should arrive which might destroy their peace. I should have taken these words as mere galantry, and regarded them no farther, if it had not seen the face of Montrano covered with a scarlet blush; which was in a moment succeeded by a deadly paleness; and soon a rising tide overwhelmed his down-cast eyes, with difficulty restrained from forcing a passage hence, and gushing out in tears. You may believe so strange a change from all the symptoms of the excess of joy to those of grief, which now I observed in him, filled me with the most shocking surprize; yet resolving to conceal it as much as possible, The misfortunes which threatened us with lasting woe, replied I, are now, I hope, blown over, and all our days to come are harmony and peace. At least, continued I, they must be so, if Montrano feels as sincere a satisfaction in our re-union as Iseria does. I fixed my eyes on his face intently, as I spoke these words, and found so much confusion there, as made me certain



in my mind, something extraordinary had happened, which I should know too soon; but what, I could not be assured. A thousand apprehensions, all at once, came cross my thoughts, which, though I was impatient to discover the truth of, I feared to ask; the disorder in my soul was too visible in my countenance, for both Montrano and his friend not to perceive it; on which the former, assuming an air as much composed as possible, considering the various agitations with which he, doubtless, at that moment was possessed, and turning to the stranger, My dear Alceſtus, ſaid he, Iſeria is yet ignorant of the reaſons which, till now, prevented me from letting her know ſhe had a living-huſband: I entreat you will relate them to her, omitting no occurrence, which either you have been an eye-witneſs of, or have heard from my repetition. I will, in the mean time, indulge reflection in yonder gardens, and pay my thanks to the mighty Diſpoſer of all things, that I am permitted once more to ſee this treaſure of my ſoul; and that I find her in perfect health, and not forgetful of her ever faithful Montrano. He concluded theſe words with embracing me in ſo tender a manner, as entirely diſſipated all the imaginations I had lately conceived to the prejudice of his conſtancy: I entreated him to ſtay while his friend gave me the hiſtory of his adventures, or that he would let me know them from his own mouth; but he ſo earneſtly begged, I would allow him the liberty he deſired, that I at laſt forbore to preſs him contrary to his inclinations; and as ſoon as he had left the room, Alceſtus began to execute his commands in theſe terms.

A perſon, ſaid he, who was indebted to my father for a conſiderable ſum, having removed himſelf and his effects to Ceylon, one of the Aſiatic iſlands, I was obliged to go there; the governor of the fort being a particular friend of our family, we judged he would have intereſt enough with the Dutch factory there, to compel the villain to do us juſtice; I embarked in the ſame ſhip, on which Montrano, at the dead of night,
was

was forced on board; we began an intimacy there, which I hope will end not but with our lives. He related to me the history of his passion for you, his marriage, and that that was the reason of his being sent to Ceylon, where one, who had been formerly a servant to his uncle, lived now in great repute; having had the good fortune to please the widow of a Dutch merchant, who made him her husband, and put him in possession of all her effects; which was very considerable. With this person, he told me, he was to tarry till commanded back by his uncle, which he expected would not be soon: he concluded his narration with those praises of you, which your beauty merits, and a thousand vows of an eternal fidelity. Though I was extremely troubled at his misfortune, a little motive of self-interest made me pleased, that I had so agreeable a companion in my voyage, and the time I was to remain at Ceylon; but to alleviate his melancholy, I gave him my promise, and indeed spoke no more than I designed, that I would use the utmost of my endeavours at my return, and oblige my father to do the same, to prevail on his uncle to recal him: but Heaven was pleased to disappoint the designs of us all. After having sailed with a fair wind and prosperous gale, till we came within a few leagues of our intended port, a storm arose, as violent as it was sudden; we lost all our masts, the belt-sprit was split in two; and after being tost to and fro for several hours at the pleasure of the waves, a great sea came in, and drove us on a little island belonging to the Maldives, called Ekber, short of Ceylon about seven leagues; it was with great difficulty we got on shore, all those little spots of earth being encompassed with huge craggy rocks, and the savage inhabitants so unskilful in every thing that can be called an art, that their harbours are little better than so many whirlpools. With an infinite deal of toil and care, however, we at last got our long-boat in, which landing a few men at a time, returned for the rest; but the captain, chief mate,

and five men, staying till the last, a sudden hurricane rising in a moment, were all lost by the vessel's splitting, as was great part of the cargo; the rest lodged on the rocks, whence they were afterwards brought away by the inhabitants of this barbarous place. We soon found, that though we had escaped the sea, we were not free from dangers as formidable as that could threaten. We had no sooner gained the shore, than we were descried by two or three of the natives, who sending forth a loud cry, ran up farther into the country; and before we could well resolve in what manner we should behave among a people whom we easily perceived to be wholly uncivilized, we saw near a hundred of them coming towards us; some armed with great branches torn off the trees, some with axes, and a few with bows and arrows; we now repented that we had taken no care to bring our guns from on board, but on second thoughts had reason to rejoice; for though we could have made a pretty good defence against this little troop, they would certainly have fallen on us in greater numbers, and, over-powered by them, at last been provoked to have given us worse treatment; we therefore opened our arms, and presented to them our naked breasts, in token of submission; on which they seemed to receive us kindly; but drawing round us in a circle, conducted us, hallooing and shouting all the way they went, till we came to a place, which, as we found afterwards, was a kind of market, where slaves, such as we were now become, were disposed of to the best bidder.

In this island, and it seems in most of the others belonging to the Maldives, there is a sort of Incas, or king, but all tributary, and acknowledging an obedience to one sovereign of all, who resides in Male, the chief of the islands, and styles himself the emperor of thirteen provinces, and of a thousand islands. He has a great number of slaves, and when he comes abroad, is worshipped as a god. There was at this time a person in Ekber employed by him to buy slaves, and the market-day

day happening to be the next day after we came, we were exposed to sale; myself with two of our mariners, were chosen for this mighty sovereign, but Montrano was the purchase of the Incas of Attoore, who had sent a messenger thither also on the same errand. The reason, that the great market was generally kept at Ekber, was not only because it was the largest of all the islands, but likewise that, lying at a more considerable distance from any of the others, than they did from one another; and more in the main sea, there was a greater probability of unhappy persons, distressed by weather, taking refuge there than in the others. I thought it a very great addition to my misfortunes, that I was to be separated from Montrano; and I believe he spoke no more than the truth, when he afterwards assured me it was so to him. I will not trouble you with what befel myself in a five-years servitude among these barbarous wretches. The charms of Montrano gained him, for some time, a milder fate. He had been employed in the vile offices, for which he was bought not many days before, as he was working in the garden of the Incas, a piece of paper, folded like a letter, fell at his feet; he took it up, and found it directed, in the Italian language, 'To the accomplished slave;' and seeing no person near him, he concluded it must be thrown from some of the palace-windows. The oddness of the adventure at first gave him an infinite surprize; but curiosity, at length, getting the better of it, he unfolded the letter, in which he found a great jewel; rich, but ill set, according to the manner of so unpolite a country. But the value of this present was no ways considerable, when compared with the knowledge, that there was a person among these Pagans, with whom there was a probability he might converse; casting his eyes, therefore, hastily over the letter, he found it contained these lines:

"SOME exclamations which I overheard you make the other day, informed me that you are my country-man;
" your

“ your air and mien demonstrate you not to be of the
 “ inferior rank of men ; I should be glad to entertain
 “ you in a manner becoming your rank, but dare not
 “ make a public show of the regard I have for you, lest
 “ it should be fatal to us both, but will soon contrive a
 “ way to lessen the hardships you endure ; in the mean
 “ time, desire you will not fail to be in the grove of
 “ oranges, behind the banquetting-house, this night
 “ at twelve o'clock. Burn this billet, and take care to
 “ conceal the diamond which I inclosed in it, more to
 “ give it weight, than that I thought such a trifle
 “ worthy the notice of a man I am resolved to favour.”

There was no name at the bottom ; nor was it in his
 power to form any conjecture, to whom it was he was
 so much obliged : it is needless, therefore, to say he
 longed, with the utmost impatience, for the hour in
 which he hoped to have this riddle solved ; you must
 believe, that in the circumstance of being a slave among
 the most barbarous people in the world, condemned to
 offices with which he was no way acquainted, and for
 want of understanding the language in which he was
 commanded, little able to comprehend his master's
 meaning, was but by stripes made to discover their
 otherwise unintelligible directions ; languishing his
 nights, painful his days ; and what doubled the misery
 of both, was the belief, that his service was eternal ;
 that the whole remainder of his life must be passed
 among those wretched savages, for ever debarred from
 all social conversation, his friends, his country, and his
 more dear Iferia. You must, I say, believe, madam,
 that in such a state, it was no inconsiderable consolation
 to think there was a person of his own country who pi-
 tied him, and seemed to have power to afford some mi-
 tigation of his misfortunes.

At last the expected moment came, he attended at
 the appointed place, and had not waited long before he
 saw, by the light of the moon, which at that time shone
 exceeding

exceeding bright, an old woman, whom he had often beheld at a distance in the palace, and knew to be an attendant on the wife of the Incas: he told me that he was so much surprized at the sight of her, that he knew not how to receive her with that ceremony, which the station she was in seemed to require, as being the chief favourite of the greatest woman in the island. She perceived the disorder he was in; and approaching him with a smile, I am afraid, said she, in Italian, that the appearance of an old woman may have put a damp to those glorious hopes the letter you received must certainly have inspired you with; but I dare swear, you have too much understanding not to know, that our good genius does not always appear to us in the most pleasing shape. However disagreeable my form may seem, I bring you tidings which may excuse my age and wrinkles. The wife of the Incas of Alfoore, as well as myself, is of your country, both born and bred up in Venice; but her inclinations being somewhat more gay than was consistent with the customs of that republic, she was sent to Brussels, where she had some relations, in order to be made a recluse; I was ordered to attend her to that place; but in our way we happened to meet with a Dutch officer, who being captivated with the charms of Elphania, (for so was then my mistress called) prevailed on her to accompany him to Holland: we lived with him some time; but the inconstancy, natural to mankind, rendering her unhappy in the loss of him, we were reduced to very great hardships, which compelled us to do something contrary to the laws; we were sent to Ceylon, to expiate, by an eternal slavery, a sin, which nothing but necessity could have made us guilty of. Being exposed to sale in the market-place, some persons belonging to this Incas bought us for his service; but we had no sooner arrived here, and were brought into his presence, than he fell so passionately in love with Elphania, that from a slave he raised her to his bed and throne: with this condition only, that she should renounce the christian

tian faith; which she did, and is now the most favoured and best-beloved of any of his queens; though he has some of a birth equal to his own. This, continued she, is the sum of our history before your arrival; but since you appeared, my royal mistress has been no more herself, all her days and nights have been taken up with contemplating in her mind the perfections of her lovely slave; but that passion, which the sight of you inspired, was extremely heightened, when happening to be in a close bower in the garden the other day, unseen by you, she heard you lament your ill fortune, and cry out for death, in terms, she said, the most tender and moving that tongue ever uttered. She was, however, extremely pleased to find you were an Italian; and her thoughts, which had till then been divided, if she should make you acquainted with the tenderness she had for you, or not, were now wholly determined to do it the first opportunity. It is charity, said she to me; it is that natural instinct which prompts us to have a pity for those of our own country, as well as love, which now obliges me to ease the sufferings of this lovely slave; nor can I will I, ought I to see him languish under miseries to which I am certain he is a stranger, and cannot long support. She had no sooner formed this resolution, than she wrote the billet, and plucking a diamond off her breast, and folding it in it, that she might be able to hurl it at a greater distance than the paper of itself might have fallen, we saw it light directly at your feet; at which we shut the window immediately, lest, in the hurry of surprize and joy, you might have approached more near than was convenient, where there are so many spies and guards perpetually attending. This is the intelligence I bring you, sir, pursued she, which if you receive not with the extremest pleasure, you are not only ungrateful, but also perverse; blind to your own interest, and deserving of the misfortunes you have already fallen under, and those which may ensue from slighted love, and tenderness abused. Montrano assured me, it

relating

relating this part of his story, that he never in his whole life had been capable of feeling so much scorn and detestation as at that minute; the name of wife to the Incas could not inspire him with such respect, as to take off his contempt for that of a transported felon, in which circumstance he found this queen had been brought to Ceylon; he had his heart already too much devoted to his beloved Iseria, for any other charms to work the least effect. Those of this queen, though she had been the greatest beauty nature ever formed, would not have been able to have compensated for the deformities of her mind. Scarce could he regard the old beldame, who came from her, with patience; he had, however, presence enough of mind to reflect on the danger of disoblighing her; but never, said he, did I go through a greater or more difficult task, than that of affecting a satisfaction at the news she brought; he did it, notwithstanding his reluctance, in such a manner as passed for truth; and the amorous Elphania, not doubting, by what her confederate informed her, but that he was as susceptible of her favours as she wished him, prevailed on her doating husband to give her leave to retire to a little palace they had farther in the heart of the country: she pretended that the air had been prejudicial to her health; and for the recovery of it, he willingly consented she should be for a little time removed. She had the liberty of chusing what slaves she pleased to attend her, and Montrano, for whose sake all this was done, was the first singled out; as for the rest, they were either such whose fidelity she could depend on, or such who had not capacities to fathom the meaning of any thing which was not directly told them. With this equipage she took leave of the Incas, and being arrived at the place to which she intended to go, the slaves were appointed each to their several employments; that of Montrano's was to overlook those that kept the rooms in order, and see that they did their duty; an easy task as to the bodily exercise of it, but his mind was in agitations

tions more violent than ever ; the humour of the mistress he now served, was more perplexing to him than the tyranny of his former masters ; nor had he less to expect from her revenge, when she should find how little he was disposed to comply with her intentions, than from the most inhuman of his own sex. She presented herself to him, her natural beauties illustrated with all the aids and embellishments of art ; she talked to him in so free a manner, that had he not been apprized of her desires by the discourse of her confidante, yet he could not have been ignorant what they were by her behaviour ; but thinking the safest, as well as most galant manner of denying, was, not to seem to know that any thing more was expected from him than submission and respect, he never approached her but with the same awe as that we enter the sacred temples ; but as this was not that sort of adoration which she expected from him, she grew extremely peevish, and after she had dismissed him from her presence, complained to her confidante of the little compliance she found in him, on which the shameless procurer of her pleasures took upon her to chide him severely ; but, while she was doing so, a sudden thought came into his head, which might gain him some time : he told her, that no man could be more sensible of the beauties of her mistress, but that he was under a solemn vow not to know the joys of love for two whole years. More than one of them, said he, is already elapsed ; and as I have kept my promise inviolable till now, have cause to fear, that if I break it, some sudden and unheard-of judgment will fall upon me. This monster of her sex endeavoured, partly by railing at his superstitious regard of oaths, as she termed it, and partly by hinting, that no punishment could ensue the breach of it, equal to that which threatened him in losing the favour of the queen to alter his determination ; but neither persuasions nor menaces being of any use, she was obliged to leave him as she found him, and return to her mistress with an account little pleasing to her. What discourse passed
between

between them was unknown as to the subject of it; but he doubted not, by the gloom which sat next day upon both their brows, that it had not been in his favour, and that he should shortly experience all that a cruel and revengeful woman, restrained by no principles of honour, religion, or generosity, could inflict; but, contrary to these suggestions, the intelligencer of the other's meaning told him, that in spite of the coldness with which he had received her queen's affections, and the disregard he paid her, in preferring a foolish vow to her embraces, she still retained a tenderness for him, which would not suffer her to cast him off, and had prevailed on her to wait the expiration of the time he mentioned, for a proof how worthy he was of the passion she had entertained for him. Montrano, said he, answered this message in terms as obliging as he could; and from that time forward was put to no further trouble till the expiration of the year. They soon removed to the great palace, where the deceived Incas received this perjured woman with such demonstrations of kindness, that the knowledge of her ingratitude to such a husband, whose love had raised her from the lowest ebb of fortune, and still continued to support her in all the pomp that that part of the world could afford, made her yet more hateful in his mind; he often told me, that he abhorred even to look upon her. But not to spin out my narration to a tedious length, the whole year of his freedom from her solicitations, he past in contrivances to get from that detested place; but found that impossible, since, had he made his escape to any of the other islands, as perhaps he might have done in a canoe, the Maldives have so good an intelligence with each other, that he must infallibly have been discovered, and sent back to endure the most cruel punishments imaginable. You may think it strange, perhaps, that neither he nor I could have any opportunity of sending to Ceylon, where we both were known, and might early have been ransomed; but the temper of those wretches

wretches is so barbarous, that, besides the use a christian slave is to them, they take delight in triumphing over and detaining them; and having no correspondence with any other nation in the world, they know not the value of their own commodities; and having every thing within themselves, which they are capable of having any relish for, regard nothing which may be offered in exchange for their slaves: gold nor silver is of any estimation with them, their current coin being a white shell which is found upon the mountains, and which the Incas keeps a guard about, it being death by the law for any person, but those appointed by him, to pick up any of it. For these reasons they have, on the frontiers of the island next to Ceylon, a constant number of troops always maintained, who suffer no boat nor person to pass either to or from that place, without a token from the Incas; for that being a place of trade, and having a factory in it of christians, without this caution it would be impossible to keep those people, who are so miserable as, to fall into their hands, from regaining their liberty. Montrano, therefore, having no way to fly from solicitations so displeasing to him, to evade them, pretended sickness: a few days before the expiration of the year, he counterfeited so well the most violent pains, that none who saw him but verily believed he languished under them. One thing, indeed, was a great advantage to his feigning, which was, that there were no physicians in that place, their way of curing diseases being to shoot arrows into many parts of the patient's body, believing phlebotomy a remedy for all disorders. Montrano suffered this experiment to be tried on him, but afterward pretended to be much worse than before. In fine, he carried on this deception for the space of seven months, at the end of which time he had an unexpected relief; Elphania fell in reality as sick as he pretended to be; her life was despaired of; and having before made an excuse that the sea air did not agree with her constitution, the Incas would needs have it, that her present disorder sprung

sprung from the same occasion, and ordered her to be removed on a litter borne on six men's shoulders, thinking that the easiest way of carriage. Montrano seeming not yet perfectly recovered, was dispensed with for not officiating in his employment, but obliged soon after to pretend a relapse; for being, on the queen's being somewhat better, sent for to come to the place where he was, and thinking this would not be a lasting pretence, he feigned madness, and committed a thousand irregularities, though none hurtful or mischievous to any body: Elphania, as well as others, was deceived for a long time; but at length discovered the imposition; by the same means she had done he was an Italian: his misfortunes growing, by their continuance and little appearance or hope of relief, more heavy to be borne, he could not forbear giving them vent in tears and exclamations whenever he was alone: he was one day overheard by the confidante of Elphania's desires, and the report that he was but seemingly mad immediately conveyed to her mistress; on which she resolved no longer to be disappointed in her love, or failing in that of her revenge, for the contempt thrown on her beauty. She again desired leave of the Incas to retire into the country; which being easily obtained, among the number of slaves she took with her, was Montrano---The antick postures of that poor lunatick, said she, may divert in the absence of my dear lord. Nobody in the least suspecting her intentions, whatever she did in those affairs was unquestioned. It was now three full years Montrano had carried on his disguise of madness, without any person in the world believing him otherwise; nor had he any thought that Elphania had discovered the deceit, till they arrived at the little palace which she had made choice of for the scene of her pleasures or revenge; but she was no sooner settled there, than sending for him into her own apartment, where nobody but the old Venetian woman was present, she began to question him, for what reason he had im-
 posed

posed on a queen who loved him. The knowledge that he was suspected did not surprize him so far, but that he had presence of mind enough to endeavour to wave it off, by replying in the same wild and incoherent manner, as he had done since he first affected to be frantick; but she would not suffer him to go on for any long time; but telling him, she was convinced of the imposition he had so unworthily put on her, and that if he did not immediately confess the true motive which obliged him to it, he should suffer the most cruel death she could possibly invent. He paused a little on these words; not, as he said, that he feared to die, but thought, that to die in this remote corner of the world, without the power of acquainting any person with his fate, was something too terrible to be borne; and thinking, that as she was so positive, no worse could befall him in a declaration of the truth, than in a fruitless endeavour to conceal it; he threw himself upon his knees, acknowledged her beauties to be infinite, returned his most humble thanks for the condescensions she had made him; but withal confessed, that he was rendered wholly unable to return her affections, by having, before he saw her, devoted his whole soul to another object; and then proceeded to relate to her the history of his love for you, his marriage, and the cruelty of his uncle; who, separating him from you, had occasioned his falling into the condition of a slave. He told her, he relied entirely on her generosity; and entreated, she would look on him with the eyes of pity and forgiveness.

When Montrano related this part of his history to me, said his friend, he told me, I must make use of my own imagination to conceive, what kind of fury it was that seized the soul of this most vile woman; and sparkled in her eyes. You, madam, pursued he to me, if your soft soul can form an idea so horrible, must tell yourself what was not in his power, who saw it, to describe, much less in mine.---What, cried she, is it for another that I am despised? Is it for the idea of an absent wo-

man

man the beauties of the present are contemned? The bursting rage prevented her from speaking any farther to him at that time; but turning to the advising fiend, who stood near her, they had some discourse together; after which, in a loud voice, It shall be so, said she; since he is no man for me, he shall not for another. With these words she flew out of the room, leaving only the old wretch with him; who bidding him follow her, conducted him to a room at the farther end of the palace, where having locked him in, she left him for some hours to meditate on what had happened; but towards evening, coming in again, Well, said she, have you considered of your late folly, in the manner you ought to do? Have you repented? And are you now resolved to accept that happiness the queen designs you?---I have already told her, answered he, that it is not in my power. ---But have you reflected, resumed she, that your life is wholly in her's? and that with a breath she can dispose your fate?---I have, said he; and whatever miseries Heaven may make her the instrument of inflicting on me, I must endure.---It is well, ungrateful wretch, cried she; but she has more of mercy than thou meritest from her: your life she will not take; but as you slight the joys of love, when proffered you by her, she will take effectual care you never shall taste them with another. Montrano protested to me, that he could not guess what it was she meant, till giving a stamp with her foot, six lusty slaves rushed in, and, in spite of his struggling, bound his hands and feet with great cords: the beldame saw it done; and asking him, once more, if he repented, to which he answered in the negative, she went out of the room, and bade the fellows do their office: on which one of them plucked out a sharp instrument, drew nearer to him, and by some actions discovered to the amazed prisoner his inhuman intent. For, madam, now, continued he, comes on the dreadful part of your unhappy husband's fate. Husband, did I say? Alas! he, from that cruel moment, had no more the power of being

being so; deprived for ever of the dear names of father and of husband; robbed of his sex, and doomed to an eternal sterility.

In some time after this fatal event, Elphania, either repenting what she had done, or that it were true, as she said, that she had given orders only to threaten, not really to inflict such a misfortune; to make what reparation was in her power, gave him his liberty, and a large sum of money, that he might transport himself to Ceylon. In spite of the just hatred Montrano had conceived against her, the circumstances he was in made him accept of her favours; and hiring a canoe, embarked in it for Candea, the chief city of Ceylon; but the weather changing, they were obliged to land him among the mountains, fifty miles short of the port he desired: the necessity, however, being unavoidable, he was forced to comply. He found some poor Dutch on the sea-coast, one of whom he took with him as a guide; but they had not travelled many miles before they were met by a gang of robbers, with whom making some resistance, he was dangerously wounded, after being deprived of all that had been given him by Elphania. The poor guide continued by him till some passengers coming by, he was taken up and carried to a house; where being taken some care of, and his wounds dressed, though after a very indifferent manner, the strength of his constitution at last brought him to himself; but the only Christians in that place being Dutch, a people who never were greatly famed for hospitality or charity, so little was contributed towards his support, that the want of necessaries kept him weak much longer than the hurts he got by the thieves would else have done. In fine, he recovered, but had not strength enough, for a long time, even to walk about his chamber, 'till that small pittance, which had been allowed him, being taken away, and the appetites of nature craving support, he crawled out into the street; an object, he said, of so much pity, that he appeared
more

more like a ghost than a living man. Having been so long kept from air, coming into it all at once, made him faint away, and he fell down at the door of a rich native of the isle; as it happened, he had less of the savage in him than most of them, and could not see a creature of his own species in so lamentable a condition, without affording him some relief; he took him in, had him laid on a bed, applied proper things for his recovery, and gave him the best refreshment he had in the house. Neither of them knew the language of the other; but the Ceylonefe made him understand by signs, that if he would serve him, he would be kind to him; but Montrano, as well as he could, let him know he was a passenger, who had been deprived of all he had of value by the robbers; and that he was travelling to Candea, where he had friends who would support him, but that he must beg his way thither. The other shook his head at this information, in token that his countrymen had little charity to strangers; but Montrano being determined, he gave him some small matter toward his support in the journey; with which, after having stayed three or four days to recover his strength, he departed. But, alas! his long indisposition and want had enfeebled his limbs in such a manner, that he rather crept than walked; he moved on, however, in this slow pace for a whole week, half a mile a day being the most he could boast to have travelled; at the end of which time he unfortunately mistook his way, and happened into a wild place, which they call the desarts of Cayamas; there did he wander up and down, unable to extricate himself from that labyrinth of rocks, which lie thick scattered in that dreadful waste; and must certainly have perished, had not Providence sent him a relief by the most unexpected means. A gang of robbers having taken a rich booty, for which, in all probability, they were pursued, had taken shelter in this place, where it was almost impossible for any to overtake or find them. Thinking themselves secure,

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they had sat down to rest and divide the prize at the foot of a great heap of stones, which seemed as if they had been thrown up by some earthquake. When Montrano came on the other side, he heard their voices; and said, he thought he never had heard a sound so pleasing as this was; which gave him intelligence, he should once more see the faces of human creatures, and he hoped be guided from that uninhabited wild. The pile which parted them was vastly long, but not very high, and they happened to lie so on the side he was, that he might easily climb to the top of it; in spite of his weakness, therefore, he attempted it, and with such success, that in a few minutes he gained the summit; whence looking down, he saw five men sitting pretty close together, counting money, which lay in a heap on the ground before them; he was considering in what manner he should get down the ridge of stones, being much more perpendicular on this side than the other, when one of the robbers, happening to cast up his eyes, saw him; the wildness of the place, his pale and ghastly looks, the guilt of the gazer, every thing conspired to terrify; and concluding him to be the ghost of some person he had murdered, gave a great shriek, and presently fell down in a swoon; his companions believing him struck with sudden death, started from their seats, and had all of them, at the same time, a sight of this affrighted object; every one took immediately to his heels, without any regard either of the booty for which they had ventured their lives, nor what became of him they left behind; and the natives of this country being extreme swift runners, they were out of sight in a moment. Montrano guessed what occasioned their terror, and cried out to them to stay; but fear had either made them deaf, or not understanding what he said, they took it for something contrary to what it was. In spite of the numberless miseries of his present condition, he has often told me, he could not forbear smiling at their flight, and falling into some reflections: how inseparable,

able, thought he, are cowardice and villainy! The place and circumstance he was in, however, giving him little opportunity for indulging them, he deferred it until another time, and made what haste he could to descend; which when he had done, he was in some debate within himself, if he should take the money, so convenient for him in his necessity, and leave the wretch, who had assisted in the unlawful gaining it, to recover as he could; or if he should endeavour to bring him to himself, and by that act of charity engage him to be his guide out of the desert; the latter of these suggestions took place, not only because he had already experienced how difficult it was for him to find his way of himself, but also that it was agreeable to the sweetness of his disposition. Determined to do this, he kneeled down by him, rubbed his breast and temples, bent him forward, and did every thing in his power to restore him to his senses; which when he had done, by signs and some few words which he had learned from the Ceylonese language, he made him at last convinced, that he was no more than a man, and had no design to hurt him. The fellow, thus re-assured, looked about for his companions, and finding they were gone, began to scramble up what they had left behind. Montrano assisted him in gathering it, and by beseeching postures, and such expressions as he could make intelligible, entreated he would conduct him from that desert, which the other promised to do; but by going round about, for fear his companions, when they had considered on the matter, should return and claim their share of the treasure, they were two days before they gained the road, but rejoiced was Montrano once more to see it. At parting, the thief seeing the miserable condition he was in, gave him somewhat to help him on his journey, and on he travelled till he came to a little town, called Javira; there I had the good fortune to renew my acquaintance with him, I having procured my liberty, by having served the sovereign of the Maldives in an exigence,

which, but for me, had cost him his life. I was taking some refreshment at a house of entertainment, such a wretched one as that place affords, when I saw a person featured like Montrano, but in such an abject and deplorable condition, and so altered in every thing from what he was, that I could not believe the first dictates of my mind, which told me, it was no other; yet resolving to be convinced, I drew nearer to him, as he was asking charity of the landlord of the house. He saw me not 'till then; but as soon as he did, Alcestus! said he. I will not go about, madam, continued this obliging friend, to represent the satisfaction I conceived at meeting with him; which would, indeed, have been as great a grief, had I not, at that time, been master of sufficient courage to ease those calamities which were visible to me: the others which were not, and which, as soon as we were alone, he informed me of, gave me a concern equal to my surprize, that any thing, which had the shape of a woman, could act in so abhorred and shameless a manner as Elphania and her confidante had done; but as there was no relief for a misfortune such as that, but patiently enduring it, I omitted nothing in my power which might console him. We made the best of our way toward Ceylon, which at last we reached; I had the good fortune to execute my father's commands on the villain who had endeavoured to impose upon him; and Montrano found the merchant to whom he had been sent by his uncle, and received from him this pleasing intelligence, that the old gentleman, repenting what he had done, had writ letters to recal him; and when the answers had let him know he had not yet arrived on that coast, had sent others full of grief, and entreating he would make all imaginable search for him. Neither of us, therefore, having any longer business at Ceylon, we resolved to leave it the first opportunity, but were obliged to wait near two years before any ship set sail for Europe; and when

when after that time we embarked, it was in a Dutch merchant-man, bound for Rotterdam; there were we also compelled to stay a considerable time before any ship offered for Venice; but at length meeting with one, we came together without any farther difficulties, and landed last night; he has not yet paid his duty to his uncle, nor would suffer me to see my father, the tenderness he had for you calling him first *here*, where, he said, I must also accompany him; not being able, he said, to relate to you himself the misfortune which you now are acquainted with from my mouth.

Thus, said Iseria, did the generous Alcestus end his melancholy narration; which having thanked him for, we went together to the garden, to see what was become of Montrano, whom we found lying in this very grove, in so sad and melancholy a posture as must have moved any one to pity, much more a wife, who loved him more than all things on this side Heaven; and whose affection was not in the least abated by the knowledge of the injury that had been done him. I entreated him to rise; but he refusing to do so, saying, the earth, darkness, and solitude, were fit for such a wretch as he was; I threw myself down by him, protesting that I would never leave him; and that if he did not wish to see me the most unhappy woman in the world, he must throw off all thoughts, and, forgetful of past misfortunes, join me in thanks to the Almighty Disposer of all blessings, that he was at last past over them, and safe in his Iseria's arms, as he should ever be in her heart. As I was speaking in this manner, Oh thou most excellent of all thy sex! interrupted he, think not I come to claim thee as a wife, to curse thy youth and beauty with the shadow of a husband: No; it would be a sin Heaven could never pardon, should I condemn thy charms to cold sterility: thou, who may'st bless the world with a race of angels like thyself. No, my Iseria! I came but to see thee once, then take my everlasting leave, and in some distant cloyster hide me for ever from thy sight.---

Unkind Montrano, answered I, think you my love was sensual? Are you not as dear as ever? And would you leave me, leave me by your own choice? Have I not endured enough, when torn from me by an inhuman uncle? I wasted seven whole years in grief; but you must now inflict a second wretchedness more dreadful than the first: that was unavoidable, but this free-will, and want of love to me, or want of mine to you. But do not think that I will suffer it; no, continued I, embracing him, thus will I cling about you ever, nor shall you throw me off; through lands and seas will I accompany you, and wheresoever you go, Iseria will be there; I am your wife, your lawful wedded wife, and will maintain my claim against the united force of the whole world. Many more expressions, of the same nature with these, did I make use of, to convince him, that I regarded him with the same tenderness as ever, and thought no misfortune equal to that of being separated from him; but could not prevail on him to alleviate his sorrows for a considerable time. Never was there a scene more moving, more truly touching to the soul, nor never conflict more equally carried on by both; fondness with fondness warred, and love was opposed against love; mine at last, however, gained the victory, and he consented to live with me in the manner you see; we pass our days in a mutual endeavour to oblige each other, and our nights in such endearments as a chaste brother might allow himself with a sister he tenderly loved. Our misfortune is entirely concealed from all the world but Alcestus and yourself, on whose discretion I dare rely, else had not made you partaker of the secret. I believe no woman could be more tranquil, in such a circumstance, than myself; yet, Miramillia, loving as I do, and beloved with the same ardour, judge, if I can bring my wishes to that pitch of resignation and content that is necessary to qualify me for the task you would have me undertake.

The

The afflicted mother sighed at the little success she had hitherto met with, and having thanked Isleria for the good opinion she had of her secrecy, took her leave, and departed with a heavy heart. The next it came in her head to address, on this score, was a lady in whose fortune there was indeed the utmost appearance of serenity. She was married to a man she long had loved, but had been prevented from being his wife by her parents, who looked on him as her inferior in point of wealth. She now seemed to be possessed of all she had to wish, and was universally believed to be among the happy few. The manner in which she received Miramillia, and the influence of every thing about her, with the tender affection she observed between her and her husband, made this afflicted mother conceive great hopes that her search was here to end.

For which reason letting her know she had something to communicate, she engaged her to retire with her into a room apart from the company, and there related to her the occasion of her coming; at which the other appeared not less surprized than those to whom she had before addressed this suit; fain she would have dissuaded her from suffering herself to be imposed on by the arts of those fellows, who have no other livelihood than what they extract from the ignorant and credulous; but Miramillia, who still continued resolute on making the experiment, would not suffer her to proceed for any time on this theme; and Stenoclea, for so she was called, had too much complaisance to enter with her into an argument which she perceived her friend determined to defend; with an air of pleasantry therefore, which had in it, however, somewhat of dissatisfaction, she told her, that whatever reasons she might have to think herself unqualified for this employment, she would undertake it; because, said she, how little soever you may benefit by it, I am certain of receiving one very great advantage by it, which is the happiness I shall enjoy in your society, which of necessity you must afford me for

the time in which I am at work for you. Miramillia, extremely pleased at the grant of her request, answered this compliment only with a smile and bow, and returned with her to the company, having obtained her promise of beginning the work the next day.

Three days had Miramillia past in this house, in which time both Stenoclea, and Armuthi her husband, seemed to study nothing so much as to divert her melancholy; but all the feats and sports their kindness invented, afforded but a small portion of satisfaction, when compared with that she conceived, at seeing this lady busily employed in that task, which so many had refused to undertake, and from which she had a greater hope than she would make show of, of obtaining her desires, and once more embracing her beloved son. It was now more than half accomplished, when Armuthi being abroad, and the two ladies sitting together conversing on ordinary affairs, a servant, with grief and confusion visible in his face, entreated to speak in private to Stenoclea, who trembling, as if fearing some expected ill, bade him follow her into another room. Stenoclea returned not to Miramillia, till she had heard a great noise below stairs, and a strange confusion of voices, which now gave this unsatisfied mother sufficient cause to apprehend, that something had fallen out which would render this lady also incapable of doing her the service she required. As she was thus reflecting and lamenting the misfortunes of others as well as herself, Stenoclea, with streaming eyes, and all the symptoms of grief, appeared: Oh! Miramillia, cried she, it is now no longer in my power to impose on you: those fears which made me ever incapable of doing you the service you required, though I concealed them, in hopes to put an end to so fruitless an enquiry, are now come to pass, and I must now be known to be the wretch I am; fain would I have deceived you into an opinion of my happiness, by shewing you how ineffectual the performance of what you asked would prove, to prevent you
from

from being any longer deceived by the subtilty of that vain predictor, who advised you to this search——but I am prevented in my design, and so far from that happiness you wish to find, must own my breast a perfect chaos of wild confusion, grief, despair, and shame.

It is hard to say, whether Miramillia was more surprized or troubled at so sudden an alteration ; but having made use of her utmost eloquence to persuade her to a patient enduring of her fate, entreated she would relate by what means she was become unhappy ; on which the other endeavouring to subdue her passions, replied, that she had not thus long made a secret to her of her most private affairs, but with an intention to put her off giving credit to the fortune-teller, and perplexing herself with a vain enquiry after what it was scarce probable she would ever find, or if she did, would be of no consequence to her desires in the end.

Long, said she, have I been wretched, through the fears of that misfortune which is now arrived ; and when you addressed to me as to a happy person, my full eyes were ready in a flood of tears to convince you of your mistake, and proclaim the situation of my heart ; but friendship interposed, and told me, that by deceiving you this once, I should preserve you from continuing to be deceived, since in finding no effect from that piece of sempry which you believed performed by hands proper to undertake it, you would no more have relied on that fabulous prediction, which I perceive has already given you so much fruitless toil. But my designs are now disappointed, the cruel certainty of my fate leaves me no room for hope, or for concealment ; you and the whole world must now be sensible, the sun in his extensive progress sees not a wretch so lost, so dead to comfort, as the undone Stenoclea.

The distraction of her thoughts here broke in, and for a considerable space of time would not permit her to utter one coherent sentence ; but summoning the whole force of that resolution she was mistress of, she at length re-

covered herself enough to satisfy the high-raised curiosity of Miramillia; and being again desired by her, prepared to give her the account she was so impatient of, and seating herself by her, began in these or the like terms.

THE HISTORY OF STENOCLEA, AND THE SIGNIORS ARMUTHI AND BARNIBAR.

TO make you acquainted, said she, with the means which has brought the sad catastrophe of my fate about, as also to let you a little into the nature and dispositions of the persons concerned in it, I must enlarge my story, by going back into those years which may properly enough be called my childish ones; many things happening at that time, though long since past, which have drawn on the misery of the present.

Know then, dear Miramillia, that I was bred the darling of my doating parents, my only brother being many years elder, and then abroad on his travels; I was looked on as the comfort of their age, their marriage having never produced any other offspring than us two. I need not tell you how careful they were of my education; the little understanding I still retain in poetry, mathematics, music, dancing, and those other accomplishments proper for a person of my sex, will sufficiently inform you; they desired I should be mistress, in as high a degree as my capacity would permit, of every thing desirable in a woman. The reputation of improvement, however, which those who had the care of instructing me favoured me with, joined to a tolerable share of beauty, gained me, before I reached the age of fourteen, a great number of visitors, who pretended themselves devoted to my charms; how much the generality

reality of them were so in reality, I gave myself not the trouble to examine, my whole wishes and desires being centred in the agreeable Armuthi, a gentleman, whose maturity may inform you, was all that was love-inspiring in his bloom ; his age did not at that time exceed mine above five years, yet was there something of a manly majesty, which, mingled with the native sweetness and innocence of his unexperienced youth, gave such charms to his air, which I am unable to express : but he was inferior in point of fortune ; and that deficiency, in the eyes of my parents, (who partially imagined the merits of their daughter might entitle her to the greatest expectations) over-balanced all his perfections. They could have given me a dowry which might have served as a competence for both, and made his wants unfelt : not all the tenderness I regarded him with, though not unknown to them, could prevail on them to consent, that I should match with one whose only jointure was his love. In fine, they were now past all remembrance of what once they were, had lost in age the softening desires of youth, and looked on grandeur as the only felicity in marriage. They were continually preaching to me the pleasures of title and precedence ; representing to me the instability of those desires which personal perfections excite, and the numberless ills to which a woman is exposed, who gives herself away merely for the sake of love ; they bid me reflect on the mutability of all passions, and especially on that by which I was at present influenced ; how wretched I should be if Armuthi, after becoming my husband, should swerve from his love, or I repent that which had made me his ; reminded me that the tie of marriage was irrevocable, and that if either of us deviated from our first flame, with what anxiety the chain would be dragged by both. But this was a doctrine in which I had no faith ; I could not believe there was a possibility for love, like ours, ever to diminish ; and as to any other mischiefs, I set them at naught. A thousand times [good Heaven ! pardon

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the wild exclamation] I have cried out, O let Armuthi be but mine, and I will defy the worst that fate can do!

But I will not detain you with any particulars of the extravagance of my passion, which are not altogether material to my story; it shall suffice to tell you, that I loved too well to listen to the pretences of any other, though there were many who solicited my father on my account, and some of them very advantageous; but I was not to be moved by their despair, by the entreaties and commands of my parents, nor by any considerations of my own interest; and made no scruple of resolutely declaring, that since I could not be the wife of Armuthi, I would be so of no man. This equally passionate lover would fain have persuaded me to make my escape, and wholly neglecting all future contingencies fly with him to some place, where unknown we might obtain the means of being made one, and consummate our loves; nay, once had he, for a handsome bribe, prevailed on a priest to join our hands without the knowledge of my obdurate parents; but neither to the one nor the other would I give consent; not that I denied through any fears of what might happen to myself for such an act of disobedience, but that I could not bear the thoughts of involving him in the misfortunes which must inevitably fall on me. I loved him with too much real tenderness to consent he should be unhappy with me; and even wished he loved me less, since I found he could not be so without me.

In spite of the diligence with which I was observed, I made use of stratagems which frequently gave us the blessing of meeting, if that can be called so, which was indeed no other than an opportunity of condoling each other, and lamenting our mutual woes. My mother's death, which happened in this time, rid me of one very watchful spy; and though I regarded her with a dutiful respect and love, yet it was so inferior to that I bore Armuthi, that the joy I took in finding myself more at liberty to see him, took away great part of that

that sorrow I should else have felt for the loss of so near and dear a relation. My father, who had, perhaps, more tenderness for her than he was sensible of himself, survived her not more than half a year, but died with the same resolution that he had lived, to prevent my marriage with Armuthi; and that he might the more certainly do so, he left my fortune dependent on my brother, and to be forfeited to him if ever I became the wife of that present gentleman; and lest my tears should work on his yielding nature to consent to it, the estate was to descend to him, to be the portion of another; both of us to be cut off from his name and title, and as we obeyed this injunction to be blessed or cursed. Severe decree of a dying parent! yet such was the aversion he had conceived for this match, that he would omit nothing which he thought might be a means to hinder it. All the hopes I had on the known sweetness of my brother's disposition were now vanished, since he could not consent I should be the bride of Armuthi, without incurring the curse of our father; nor had the power to preserve me from beggary, without being made a beggar himself. I thought my condition now more desperate than ever; I had indeed no longer obstacles to keep me from conversing with this idol of my soul, as often or as freely as I pleased; but to what end did I see or converse with him, but to become more unhappy by the daily discovery of some new charm, and the reflection that I must never be more his than now I was? I had but one faint shadow of comfort, and that was, that at my brother's return, which was now expected every hour, I should persuade him to mitigate the sentence of my father's testament; and though he could not suffer me to receive my dowry, might evade the penalty of paying it, by allowing me the interest of it per annum, under the denomination of charity. This I sometimes flattered myself I should persuade him to do, and it was this alone which the unhappy Armuthi and myself had to preserve us from despair; for he,

alas!

alas ! had no probable view of maintaining the charges of a family, his whole dependance being on the favour of an uncle, who, though he very much encouraged his addressees to me, while there was the least hope of prevailing on my father to consent to the marriage, was now as much averse, since he had heard the cruel conditions of his will ; and often chid Armuthi for continuing his visits to me. I had not seen him for two days, when, to my inexpressible surprize and grief, I received this letter from him.

Here Stenoclea opened her cabinet, and taking out a paper, read to Miramillia the following lines :

“ MY tongue has for some time been endeavouring
 “ in vain to tell you, oh my for ever loved Stenoclea !
 “ what now I force my pen to do. Oh ! with what
 “ words shall I express what it is I mean ? Can I live,
 “ and say that I no more must see you ; no more must
 “ listen to the enchanting harmony of your heavenly
 “ voice ; no more must hear you own a tenderness,
 “ which to be blessed with, there is not a saint but might
 “ forego his heaven, and stand excused for change of
 “ rapture ? To what a hell am I accursed that must
 “ endure all this ? nay, like Bellerophon, must my
 “ own sentence bear. Yet will I not complain, nor
 “ utter one syllable to express the anguish of my soul,
 “ or excite an unavailing pity in yours. Fate, who
 “ ordains me to this misery, will soon, I hope, be
 “ kindly cruel, and make it too violent to be lasting,
 “ and strike me dead at once. For oh, Stenoclea ! I
 “ have resolved to go for ever from you ; to carry from
 “ your sight a wretch, whose contagious woes drive
 “ peace and happiness from their loved mansion---your
 “ gentle breast. Never, never will I renew those vain
 “ desires of unaccomplished love, nor persecute you
 “ with a fruitless suit. Far from your sight will I con-
 “ ceal for ever this ill-fated form, too much beloved,
 “ since too little worthy of being loved ; and leave you
 “ to

“ to regain that peace which I have too long destroyed.
 “ Guilty, as miserable, should I be to wish, much less to
 “ attempt, the obscuring of so bright a star ; and in-
 “ volving in the gloom of mine, a life which has so many
 “ opportunities of shining with the utmost splendor.
 “ Oh ! may no thought of me overcloud your future
 “ joys, but an eternal round of blessings crown each
 “ ensuing day ! Farewell ! believe, that in forsaking
 “ you, I now do more to prove my love, than had I
 “ spent the best part of my blood in fighting with some
 “ happier rival ; nay, even in dying for you : that had
 “ been a glorious end ; but this I now go to seek a mean,
 “ lingering, and painful one. Pity me ; oh ! to the
 “ last moment of my life, adored and loved Stonoclea !
 “ for I would still be pitied, though not loved. Hea-
 “ ven ! that I should wish Stenoclea not to love me !
 “ What is there but that dear comfort to withhold me
 “ from running madly into some desperate action, and
 “ breaking through all laws both human and divine ?
 “ Yet, till you cease to afford it, peace must be a
 “ stranger to your breast. Forget me then, banish me
 “ your thoughts ; but wish me not to live : in mercy
 “ pray for the speedy death of

“ The despairing,

“ The distracted,

“ Yet adoring

“ ARMUTHI.

“ P. S. What I have resolved, not even your
 “ commands shall prevent me from executing ; this
 “ therefore comes expecting no reply, and before you
 “ can have formed one, I shall be past the reach of it.
 “ Adieu, once more, too lovely, and too good for my
 “ repose or your own !”

I cannot express the grief I was in at the receipt of
 this letter ; I was nearly touched with the generosity of
 his behaviour, and joined with him in the opinion, that
 since

since there was scarce a possibility of our being at peace, and indeed the reputation of both demanded our separation, yet could I not consent to it; I found my soul too weak to resolve against what gave me so much pleasure as his society, even though it were only a partnership in misfortunes. I sent immediately to his lodgings, charging the messenger to tell him, I must speak with him before he went. But my commands arrived too late, and I was soon after informed, by one who was intimate with his uncle, that he was gone to travel, but to what part of the world was kept a secret. His only design, as he has since told me, being to seek a cure for his hopeless passion, he thought it would be an ill recipe to feed the distemper by letters or messages from the beloved object. This relation of his alone knew where he went; and having so great a desire to prevent his nephew's throwing himself away, as he called it, on a woman, who if she married him must have no fortune, there was little probability he would reveal it. Inconsolable was I for his departure, sometimes believing his proceeding had been occasioned by an excess of love, and regard for my repose; at others, that it was owing to the want of it; and whenever this last reflection came across my thoughts, it gave me pains too terrible for description.

Soon after this I received letters from Barnibar, so my brother was called, dated from Padua, which brought me word, he was on his return, and would speedily be in Venice: never was there a more tender affection than that with which we had regarded each other before he went to travel; and as I had not abated any part of that which I had felt for him, so I suspected not that absence had diminished his for me, and promised myself in his society a real consolation for the loss of Armuthi: but, O God! when I expected to embrace him, and every moment thought the next would bring him to my arms, I received an account of his death, that he was killed by a gentleman on the road with whom he unfortunately happened to quar-

rel; and a servant he had with him endeavouring to revenge his master's death, was also left for dead; that the person by whom this misfortune had happened was unknown, and had made his escape, so that all hope of doing justice to his manes was extinguished.

Judge what a surprize this must be to a sister that so tenderly loved him; I found no comfort in the vast fortune which by his death I became mistress of, and looked on myself as the most forlorn creature in the world. O, Armuthi! would I cry, thou hast abandoned me, and Heaven knows where thy despair will carry thee---And Barnibar! thou who alone, by thy advice and tender friendship, couldst have brought peace to my afflicted soul, art torn from me by some inhuman hand---O! bring the murderer to light, good Heaven! pursued I, that I may prosecute him with the severest vengeance---let him be taken, let him be detected when he least fears the danger, and sudden ruin overwhelm him, as that he brought on Barnibar, my unhappy brother!

But I will not, continued she, weeping afresh at this part of her story, prolong the sad catastrophe of my fate, by repeating to you the exclamations I made, or the thousand vows I offered up to Heaven, and every saint, for bringing forth this unknown destroyer of my brother's life. I had scarce celebrated the solemnity of his funeral, before I heard Armuthi was brought back to Venice, being seized on the road with so violent an indisposition, that he was unable to pursue his journey, and had taken the first opportunity of a litter for his return. It was reported he was at the point of death, and entreated to see me. Sure never any heart was subjected to such vicissitudes of anguish, as was mine, to have him restored; but restored in such a manner as must deprive me of him for ever, was infinitely more dreadful than all I had before endured. I now perceived that he was still more dear than Barnibar had been, and that all the ties of blood are far inferior to those of love:---In spite of the disgust I had conceived
against

against his uncle, I flew to his house, and regardless of the censure of the world, omitted nothing which I thought might contribute to the recovery of this soul-sick lover, for well I saw grief was his only distemper. My kindness was so great a cordial, that, contrary to the judgment of the physicians, who some hours before I came had said he could not live, I left him very much restored, and in so fair a way of recovery, that it amazed all about him. His uncle, now as obliging to me as he had formerly been the reverse, gave my generosity and constancy such praises, as whoever had heard might have believed; he also was my lover: but I took little notice of them, well knowing that to have a great fortune, independent by the death of my brother, was the greatest charm I had for him. Early the next morning did I visit my dear patient again, and found him in a condition, such as gave me great hopes I should complete the cure I had so fortunately begun; in fine, I left him not till it was fulfilled, and having now no obstacle to prevent his being my husband, was married to him in a short time after, to the great satisfaction of his now obliging uncle.

Nothing ever was more ardent, or more tender than the affections of Armuthi; all his actions, all his words, were so many demonstrations of his sincerity; and as I had given him the utmost proofs of mine, he could not but think his lot extremely fortunate; yet in the midst of all the joy he expressed at my being his, I every now and then observed some starts of anguish breaking out, and giving a check to rapture; deep groans, and sighs too heavy for restraint, would ever and anon burst from his troubled breast, even when surrounded with his most gay companions; nor could the cheerful glass, when swiftly passing round in jocund healths, repel their force, though oft I have seen, and wondering seen him, struggle with the innate disturbance; but in unguarded sleep, with what dire furies seemed his brain possessed! It is false, he would cry, wildly starting up, I killed him not; and then, again, throwing himself

on the floor in strange convulsions, Hide, hide me, roared he out, from the offended ghost! Stop, stop that stream of blood! it will swallow me! See! I am encompassed with a liquid fire! all hell is on me! Awaked and frightened with such dreadful sounds, I have perforce broken the chain of sleep, and taken him to my arms; but, oh! what tremblings had the dire visions left on all his frame! in vain, with every art of fond, endearing love, did I endeavour to bring him back to peace; too well I saw tranquillity was banished from his breast, and he but wore a show of soft contentment. As nothing ought to be a secret between persons whom love and law had united in the sacred tie of marriage, I pressed him, with all the tenderness I was capable of expressing, to reveal to me the cause of his affliction; but never could I obtain from him this proof of what he had so often sworn, to deny me nothing I could ask, and in his power to grant; but, on the contrary, he told me that he had in reality no cause for grief, that those troubled visions were a disorder hereditary to his family, and that it was madness to impute the wild ideas of fancy, in which reason had no part, to any real disorder in the waking mind, which he assured me was entirely free from remorse, or guilt of any secret sin, which should occasion such confusion, as he was sensible sometimes appeared in him. I cannot say I was perfectly satisfied with this reply; but having frequently spoke to him on this head, and finding him still the same, and at last to grow a little uneasy, that I expressed a diffidence in what he said, I was obliged to give over any farther interrogatories concerning the affair: his disorders, however, encreasing, especially in sleep, gave me also perturbations which were very terrible to sustain: he so frequently crying out on blood, made me indeed think some had been shed by unwarrantable means; and more than once it struck into my mind, how dreadful a ruin we must be involved in, if by any accident he and my brother should have met, and it should be the

the ghost of that unhappy youth, whom he so often named; and the bare apprehensions that such a thing was possible, gave me horrors which I am not able to express; but I endeavoured to banish such thoughts as much as possible, and whenever any thing happened to renew them, strove with all my might to overcome them by arguments of a contrary nature; yet would they not wholly forsake me, and the condition I was in was far from happy.

About five months since our marriage, did I live without any certainty, that there was something in the bottom of all this, more than what I have told you. Oh! would to God I never had been convinced! Suspence, tormenting as it was, was yet inferior to what ensued the dreadful detection of Armuthi's crime, and my irremediable misfortune; but murder though for a time concealed, will, sometime or other, break forth, and blood will call for blood. I was sitting this morning in a low parlour, when I observed a man who seemed to be enquiring for some person in the neighbourhood; I imagined I had seen the face, and looked more earnestly, when presently I saw him come to our gate, and on his near approach knew him to be Stilicon, an old servant in our family, who had attended my brother in his travels, and the same who was reported to have been murdered with him at Padua: I was infinitely pleased to find him alive, hoping by him I might discover who was the destroyer of my dear brother, and take that vengeance which his death required: I ordered he should be admitted immediately, and as soon as he was, began to question him concerning the manner of that unhappy accident; to which he replied in these terms:

We had not, madam, said he, left Padua more than half an hour, before we met a gentleman well mounted, but unattended; either through design or chance, he rode so near my master, that their horses jostled, and the stranger's horse being somewhat fiery, gave a sudden spring, which was very near throwing his rider; he

he taxed Signior Barnibar with incivility, imputing the cause to him, as not having taken care to guide his beast, or turn him out of the way. My master not thinking he owed that respect to a person unknown to him, and whose appearance seemed not to command such a deference, answered him in terms befitting the arrogance of the demand; on which the other, who, I believe, was heated with wine, challenged him to the proof, which of them merited to be esteemed the bravest man: my master, unwilling to decline the combat, leaped in a moment from his horse, commanding me to take care of him, and, drawing his sword, ran to meet his antagonist, who was already prepared, and, at the first push, received a wound under his left breast of which he immediately expired; I, distracted at what I saw, flew to the sword of my dear dead master, resolute to revenge him, or perish with him: I confess myself too weak to do the former, but was pretty near obtaining my desire in the other; for the murderous weapon which had deprived him of life was buried in my body, and but with difficulty drawn thence by its remorseless master, who, leaving me weltering in my blood, to all appearance dead, made the best of his way toward the city. Some passengers soon after coming that way, the body of Signior Barnibar was conveyed back to Padua, whence you know it was afterwards conveyed to Venice, to be interred with his noble ancestors: I was put under the care of an able surgeon, who, contrary to all expectations, worked a cure on me; but I continued so weak, that I was unable to begin my journey till three days since. Heaven has, however, enabled me to return at a season to revenge the untimely death of my dear master. Early this morning, as I was coming to enquire where I might pay my dutiful respects to you, I saw the barbarous assassin, the idea of whose face, since that cursed moment in which I first beheld him, has never been absent from my mind. I followed, unnoticed, and no doubt forgotten

forgotten by him, till I saw him enter a magnificent house a few streets off; whence running immediately to a magistrate, I made oath of what I knew, and had proper officers, and a warrant granted to apprehend him. He is now under a strong guard, and I can salute you, madam, continued he, with the joyful news that your brother's ghost will shortly have the vengeance it requires.

So strongly, said Stenoclea, did the fears I have already acquainted you with work in me, that for some moments I was incapable of asking Stilicon the name of him whom he had apprehended; but when I did, he answered me, that he was ignorant either of the name or quality of the person, but that having caused him to be seized, he presently enquired where he might find me, being willing to be the first who should acquaint me with the pleasing tidings.

Never was such a mixture of hope and terror as that I endured all the time he was speaking; I could not think it Armuthi, yet would have given almost my life to have been certain it was not. About this time I heard you coming down stairs, I ordered the fellow to be entertained by the servants, and came into the room to you; I concealed my disorder as well as I was able, and indeed the more I considered the matter, the more I found comfort; I could not think, if it were really my husband who was in custody, but that I should have heard of his misfortune from himself; I resolved, however, to be informed of the truth, by sending a person to the prison; but before I had well determined in what manner to proceed, I was called to one who brought me a letter, the character of which, on the superscription, I knew to be that of Armuthi, and guessed the fatal purport before I read it in these lines.

As she spoke these words, she took out of her pocket a letter, which she put into the hands of Miramillia to read, while she indulged the greatness of her sorrows in

tears, now again past the power of utterance by speech : her sympathizing friend considering, to repeat the contents of that paper would serve but to encrease her griefs, read to herself as follows :

“ I Need not now be demanded the reasons of
 “ that despair you have so often observed, and which
 “ were indeed too justly visible for you not to perceive,
 “ yet Heaven will, I hope, forgive a crime which was
 “ involuntary.---Oh ! that you would as readily be
 “ brought not to hate the man, whose death will soon
 “ atone the murder of Barnibar ! But that were too
 “ vain a hope : by one rash act I have deprived you of
 “ a brother, who was extremely dear to you, and of a
 “ husband who valued nothing in competition with you
 “ ---What can I say in vindication of what I have done,
 “ which will not seem rather to add to the heinousness
 “ of it ? Yet had I loved you to a less violent degree, I
 “ had not thus been criminal ; the grief I conceived for
 “ having taken the life of an innocent gentleman, and
 “ the brother of Stenoclea, should have made me, the
 “ next moment I knew to whom my sword had been
 “ so fatal, resign myself to justice ; and, self-accused,
 “ testified how little my heart was capable of taking
 “ the part of murder, though acted by my own hand :
 “ but, oh ! I must then have gone to the grave un-
 “ blessed with your possession---it was not life, but the
 “ enjoyment of Stenoclea, that made me screen the
 “ murderer of your brother from the just censure of the
 “ law ; yet, oh ! I confess it was a self-interested flame,
 “ and you ought never to forgive the man, who, to
 “ feast on your charms, involved you in his destruction.
 “ Horrid guilt ! I tremble to think how much I have
 “ wronged you ; pity me, it is all I ask ; as for a mi-
 “ tigation of my first crime, the killing of your brother,
 “ it is what I neither hope, nor will endeavour ; the
 “ law requires my blood, and I will yield it a willing
 “ sacrifice ; be you no more severe, nor hate, after
 “ death,

“ death, him who only wished to live for you, and
 “ never can be other than

“ Your most passionately
 “ affectionate, though unhappy,
 “ and too guilty husband,

“ ARMUTHI.

“ P. S. I dare not entreat to see you, in the circum-
 “ stances under which I am; yet hope you will not re-
 “ fuse that comfort to my latest moments, which shall
 “ be all employed in imploring blessings on you. Once
 “ more pardon and pity the wretch, who was your
 “ faithful husband!”

Now tell me, Miramillia, resumed Stenoclea, gentle lady, advise me what to do, if a condition so truly desperate as mine can admit of any which may afford the least shadow of a comfort. The moment I had read these heart-wounding lines, officers came into my house, are now in possession as of the goods of a delinquent, and shortly will the lost Armuthi be made an example of public justice, and I, his wife, be driven out to ills, the least of which is beggary.

Few people had more the art of persuasion, or a greater share of good-nature to comfort the distressed, than Miramillia; but the case was here too desperate, and all she could do for a long time, was to bear her company in tears; but recovering herself as well as she was able, she at last begged she would not give way to sorrow; and starting on a sudden, as one waked from a trance, Since you desire my advice, Stenoclea, said she, I will give it you, and have bethought me of a way, which, if it succeeds, will save you from all the miseries you dread; Armuthi will live; your reputation will be safe, and goods and lands preserved. You must, continued she, bend your whole study to raise friends to procure a pardon for your husband; thus far the duty of a wife obliges you to do; but as it is your brother he

has

has killed, ill would it become you to live with the murderer of so near and dear a relation. No, you must save Armuthi, but must see him no more. You must be content to pass the remainder of your days in lonely solitude, a widow while your husband lives; and I think, said she, should you dispose, in charitable uses, one half of that estate which by his death would all be forfeited for a less pious end; and with the other retire to a cloyster, there to pray for the expiation of the sin of him, who, doubtless, must still be dear to you; it would be the greatest means of bringing peace to your own mind you could make use of; and besides, be a glorious pattern of virtue, thus fulfilling both the conjugal and fraternal duty.

It was without the least hesitation that Stenoclea assured her, she would gladly take her counsel in every particular, but seemed to entertain little hopes of prevailing for a pardon for Armuthi; on which Miramillia readily made her an offer of using what interest she had with the Senate; and indeed she so effectually made good her promise, that in a week's time she raised this afflicted lady from that extremity of despair she had been in, by obtaining the life of her dear husband. His pardon was signed, and he was released from prison; but before he was so, Miramillia, who thought Stenoclea could not continue to live with him with honour, took care to remove her to a monastery. The distraction of Armuthi, when he found on what terms he was saved, being nothing material to the intent of this book, I shall not go about to describe; therefore shall only say, that when all he could do had proved ineffectual to move Stenoclea from that resolution she had taken by the advice of Miramillia, and by the latter of these ladies being convinced, that he owed no less than such a self-denial to the memory of Barnibar, he followed the example of his wife, and withdrew into a convent, where, among the society of the holy fathers, he was in a little time taught to despise the vanity of all sensual enjoyments.

ments, and to spend the days allotted him in this world, in preparations for a better. Stenoclea grew a great example of piety; and after their mutual conversion, there passed letters between them, which have been printed since their deaths, for the edification of others in piety and virtue.

Miramillia left them not till she had seen every article of her advice obeyed, and this so lately unhappy pair in a fair way of being tranquil in their own minds; and looked upon as eminent examples of resolution and strength of virtue, by all who knew them or had heard their story.

But now having so happily finished this good work, her own misfortunes, and the memory of her dear son, made her begin again to think on the fortune-teller's prediction, and renew the search she had for some time neglected, to serve the unfortunate Stenoclea.

In her way home, she passed near the house of a lady who seemed to live in a perfect tranquility, and who being pretty well advanced in years, she thought might at least be free from that destructive passion which had been almost always the cause that she had hitherto found it so difficult to have her wish accomplished.

She ordered her coachman, therefore, to drive to the house of this lady, and was received by her in a manner which left her no room to doubt she should be refused in the grant of her request, as did the appearance of every thing about her make her hope there was no danger of its not being in her power: she did not, however, immediately acquaint her with the cause of her coming, being determined before. She did so, to be fully assured that her search would not here also be as fruitless as it had hitherto been. She continued with her three or four days without letting her into the secret, in which time she observed nothing that could give her cause to fear she should have less success than she wished. Never woman had a more deserving and obliging husband; two fine sons and one daughter were the product of their marriage

marriage joys ; they had an affluence of the goods of fortune, lived beloved and respected by their neighbours, and in a perfect tranquillity at home, all the family seeming to study nothing but the satisfaction of the other. Such a concord, thought Miramillia, must infallibly produce a happiness, which without it grandeur cannot give ; and now determined to pursue her project, communicated to Tellisinda, for so was the lady called, the motive which, joined to the regard she had for her, had engaged her to this visit ; but no sooner had she done speaking, than the other, by a deep sigh, testified how little she was qualified for such an undertaking : which greatly surprizing Miramillia, Alas ! said she, am I also here deceived ? Is Tellisinda so unthankful to Heaven for the blessings she enjoys, as not to be contented with her state ? What secret care, or rather what imaginary ill, intrudes upon your peace, and poisons the real felicities of your life ?---Ah, my dearest Miramillia ! replied that lady, have a better opinion, I beseech you, of my understanding, than to believe I create dæmons on purpose to disturb and fright me : no ; I assure you, on the contrary, that it was only my too strenuous endeavours to preserve my peace that has destroyed it ; I feared to be unhappy, and have made myself so ; by aiming to avoid misfortunes, I have met them ; but I know I speak in riddles, and as my breast has long laboured with the secret, I will explain it to you, and make you judge, if the griefs I labour under have a substantial source or not. Miramillia was preparing to give her some assurances of her fidelity, but the other would not suffer her to proceed ; telling her, that if she had not an entire confidence in her, she should have taken the same care to conceal her discontent from her, as she had done from the rest of the world. Some few compliments of this kind being past between them, Tellisinda prepared herself for the performance of her promise, and soon after accomplished it in these terms.

THE HISTORY OF TELLISINDA

THOUGH, perhaps, said she, never any persons, linked in the bonds of Hymen, loved with a more true affection than myself and the chevalier ; yet having been married four years without any child, he grew so excessively discontented, that I had reason to fear a decrease of his tenderness : I endeavoured to console him for the want of a blessing, which, indeed, I then thought I never should afford him, by arguments such as these : I told him, that if we were not permitted to enjoy the comforts of children, we were also free from the troubles and cares which necessarily attend a paternal state ; that if Heaven had thought fit to make us parents, we should have been so ; and that we ought not to repine at the decrees of him, who knew better what was good for us than we did for ourselves. In fine, I omitted nothing that my little reading, both in divinity and philosophy, enabled me to say ; yet still he was uneasy ; and though he said nothing in contradiction to what I offered, yet did a sullen peevishness sit on his brow while listening to me ; and sometimes he would fling from me, leaving the room while I was in the middle of my discourse. This distemper grew every day more upon him ; and I began at last to fear I should entirely lose his affections ; the apprehensions of so terrible a misfortune threw me into a deep melancholy ; I became oppressed with it, and could not forbear imparting it to a friend, in whom I had great confidence ; by her I was persuaded, contrary to my reason, my religion, and that aversion I was bred to have to every thing which bordered on a deceit, to feign myself with child. But as there appeared no other way of regaining the affections of my husband, I was prevailed on to follow her advice. I did so ; and the joy which from that time appeared in the countenance of the chevalier, made me well enough satisfied with

with what I had done. Estharia, for so she was called, who had counselled me to this stratagem, took it upon her to provide a child against the time in which it was expected I should be delivered. I will not trouble you with the particulars of our management; it shall suffice to tell you, that the fraud passed undiscovered, and I was supposed to be the mother of a fine boy. I had scarce leisure for reflection, so much were my thoughts employed in answering the congratulations of my friends, and the now renewed endearments of the chevalier; but when I had, I cannot say I was perfectly at ease; the natural antipathy I had to all kinds of deceit, made me look on myself with a kind of contempt; and conscious how little I deserved the tenderness I received from my husband, at least for that which had engaged it, was ashamed within myself for receiving it. I was for some time also before I could fashion myself, to behave to the child in any manner becoming a mother; but time, which renders all things easy, brought me at length to dissemble with a good grace enough; and at last, indeed, accustoming myself to fondle and caress it, grew to have a sort of tenderness: but, alas! it could at most be no more than that of a good-natured nurse, as I soon after was convinced; for my supposed son being about a year old, I became, indeed, with child; and I no sooner found I was so, than I perceived a vast difference in my affections, even to that unborn product of my own, than I had ever known for that, whose little engaging actions could not but excite a sort of love in me. In due time he, who now passes for my younger son, but is, indeed, the only one I ever had, made me in reality a mother; and with that name informed me with all those softening fears, those tender perplexities, and ravishing fondnesses, which I had so often observed and wondered at in others. But when the joy of seeing that dear image of myself gave way to cooler consideration, how severely did I accuse myself for the deceit I had used! how greatly did I blame Estharia

for the advice she had given me ! But she was now dead, and past the reach of my reproaches. The thoughts that he must be the inheritor of the estate of my dear son, drove me almost to madness, and filled me by degrees with a kind of hatred to that poor innocent, who was but guilty of offending me through my own fault ; for I must acknowledge, that from his earliest infancy till this time, he has discovered such a sweetness of disposition, as would have made me happy in being the mother of such a son, had I in reality been so. He is now esteemed the finest gentleman in this part of the country ; and, in spite of the prejudice of nature, I cannot but confess, that in many things he very much excells his supposed brother ; yet, deserving as he is, oh Miramillia ! he is a stranger to my blood, and is it not hard that he should deprive him, who is not, of his inheritance ? Yet, by what means shall I avoid it ? A thousand times, in the fondness of soul for the other, I have opened my mouth to tell the chevalier the whole story ; but fear and shame as often prevented me from speaking. I cannot discover the fraud I have been guilty of, without exposing myself at once to the indignation, and, perhaps, eternal hatred of a husband who is very dear to me, and the just censure and reproaches of the whole world ; for it cannot be supposed, but that Herranius, so is my pretended son called, would inveigh loudly against the injustice of my proceedings. But if I were so disposed, I know not by what means I should make out the truth of what I say ; Estharia is dead, as I have before observed ; there was but one person beside her let into the secret, who also is no more. I know not from whom that subtle creature procured him ; nor can I, by any other proof but my own oath, make out that he is not mine : I should incur the hate and scorn of all who know me ; and, perhaps, leave things in the same position they were in before. Was ever affliction equal to mine ? Have you, in all your inquisition after happiness, found a person more truly

truly distant from it, than the unfortunate Tellifinda? ---It is easy, madam, replied Miramillia, for any one, who is a mother, to guess a mother's grief in so perplexing a circumstance; yet cannot I advise you to throw Herranius off: he is your son by adoption, though not by birth; and you know the old Romans made no difference between the one and the other, but according to the virtues they observed in them. Herranius, you say, has merit; let that endear him to you; you have robbed him of parents, to whom, perhaps, he might have been dear; though misfortunes prevailed on them to part with him for the hope of a better provision: not that, methinks, I would have him, who is really your son, be deprived of his birth-right; there may be ways and means found out to make them at least equal in their fortunes; and it will be of much better consequence to study that, than, by betraying the secret to the chevalier, run the hazard of forfeiting his affections; and, at the same time, be guilty of a cruelty to an unhappy youth, who thinks himself your own.

Tellifinda could not but approve her reasons; she assured her she would take the advice she had so kindly given, but could not bring herself to that state of tranquillity which was necessary to oblige her in the affair which had brought her thither; nor did the other, since made acquainted with her story, expect it from her; and therefore took her leave in a short time.

Having made so many vain essays among the married ladies, she began to imagine that there was no possibility of finding one in that state entirely free from care, and therefore resolved, if she prosecuted her search, it should be only to those who had not yet given up their freedom she would apply. She bethought herself of a young lady, who by the death of her parents was left mistress of a very considerable fortune; she was very beautiful, and had accomplishments enough to make her a fit wife for the first nobleman in Venice; but her gaiety, and the unaffected ease of her conversation, made it evident

she was yet wholly free from any infection from that dangerous passion, which is generally the original of all the misfortunes of the fair.

Miramillia had no sooner recovered the fatigues of her journey, than she went to visit Amalia, for by that name was this lady distinguished; she found a vast deal of company with her, and her good humour alone it was which gave life to the conversation. Our afflicted mother did not doubt but that contentment dwelt here, and longed till she had seen the other ladies depart, that she might communicate to her the request she had to make. At length this part of her wish was fulfilled; and she was beginning to endeavour for the other, when a woman in an ordinary habit came into the room; on the sight of whom Amalia rose from her seat, and begging pardon of Miramillia for a moment's absence, ran with her into a closet, with all the appearance of a most eager impatience in her looks and air. She returned not in a considerable time; and when she did, the alteration, which was visible in her countenance, made Miramillia believe some very extraordinary accident had happened; and in that opinion, Madam, said she, I hope you have heard nothing which should rob you of any part of that cheerfulness which lately was so entertaining to your friends?---Oh, madam! replied she, the saddest accident! I never was so much perplexed in my whole life; I would rather have given half my fortune, than have met with such a disappointment. It is not to be borne. Good God! continued she, fretting more and more, to be debarred of one's will in such a thing as this; sure I have the hardest fortune of any one in the world.---I hope, said Miramillia, you are not entering into a law-suit?---No, no, answered the other, I have enough to trouble me without that, of a more vexatious nature; never any body was so disappointed, so mortified. These words filled Miramillia with a kind of curiosity to know what had worked so great a change in her; she continued to ask her several questions concerning the cause of her disorder,

disorder, as if it proceeded from the news of the death of some one she had a friendship for, and several other such demands; to all which she answered in the negative, but joined to it still, that her misfortune was far worse: which words raising to a greater height Miramillia's desire of knowing, she entreated to be made the confidante of this secret; but it was not in the power of the other presently to comply with her request, the disturbance of her mind not permitting her to bring forth any more than broken sentences: tears at length afforded her some relief; and after giving a loose to them for about two or three minutes, she regained the power of speech, and related her calamity in these words: you know, said she, that there is a great ball at court next week; all the Beau monde will be there, and every body is endeavouring to be as fine as they can: Sabina, who is, without exception, the vainest creature in the world, showed me a piece of the richest brocade I ever saw in my life, that is to be made up for her against the time; and you never heard any thing boast with so much insolence as she did, that she should be the best dressed of any body: silly creature! she forgot she was talking to a person who could as well afford to purchase a handsome thing as herself. I was resolved to be even with her, and had formed a design, which, if not prevented by the laziness or treachery of the person I employed in it, would have been an excellent piece of revenge. With a vast deal of industry and some artifice, I procured a pattern of Sabina's brocade, and finding it was not to be matched, sent it to my mercer, whom I ordered to show it to the weaver, that he might make a certain number of yards for me exactly of the same figure, but with a vast deal more silver in the ground: there are also some large green leaves in it, on which I intended to have had here and there several small diamonds and rubies, and other precious stones tacked on. Oh! it would have been the most beautiful fancy, and the richest, that ever was seen; but, oh Miramillia! the

base wretch, that I depended on, that promised me so faithfully, has disappointed me; he sent word just now, that he begged my pardon, but could not possibly get it done in the time. Was ever such a neglect, such an impudence, when I had told the fellow he must work night and day to do it? I could tear him in pieces, and myself too, that I must be triumphed over by such a creature as Sabina, who, though she is neither handsome nor very young, will have all the world staring at, and admiring, her clothes, while nobody takes any notice of me, though, without any vanity, there is no comparison between us.

Miramillia could scarce contain her laughter at the recital of so ridiculous a misfortune; and, willing to console her as well as she could——But, dear Amalia! said she, why should you afflict yourself so deeply? Methinks this vexation might easily be removed; there are without doubt other very handsome silks in town; buy the richest the shops will afford, and pursue your design of embroidering it with diamonds; I am confident you may make it appear equally glorious with her's, whatever it be. That is true, replied Amalia; but, my dear, you mistake the thing: the mortification I proposed to give her pride was this, to have of the very same pattern a silk so infinitely to outshine her's. I would not give a ryal to be finer than she in any other dress; but it would have been the most elegant satisfaction to have observed the baulk it would have been to her, to have beheld her own pattern so much outdone. But why do I talk of it? continued she; my hope is past; all my designs are frustrated; and I must content myself either to feign an indisposition and stay at home, or, by going there, resolve to endure all the fine compliments that will be made her on the delicacy of her fancy.

All that Miramillia could say to her was of little service to make her in a better humour, and she was obliged to leave her to indulge it, not imparting any thing of the reasons which had induced her to this visit; rightly judging,

judging, that when people set their hearts on trifles, a disappointment, even in them, is as hard to be endured, as things of the greatest consequence are to others.

Not being willing yet to give over her search, the next whose character promised her success was Clorilla, a young lady of great birth, beauty, and education; but she was inconsolable, because her father, being of a different turn of mind, had refused a post of honour offered him by the Senate, and another had accepted it, who had daughters, that by virtue of their father's office were now entitled to sit above her in all public assemblies. She bore this vexation with much the same degree of moderation, as Amalia had done the disappointment of her silk: Miramillia concluding nothing was to be expected here to forward the experiment she was so much desirous to make trial of, ordered her coach to drive to the house of Claribella, a young lady who seemed to have every thing that can complete happiness excepting a husband, and that was every day in her power to be possessed of, being solicited in marriage by the richest and most accomplished noblemen in Venice; but she appeared no friend to love, and declared to all her acquaintance, that she had yet never seen the man who had any temptations for her to quit her liberty. She had the reputation of being of the most easy, as well as gay temper imaginable; and Miramillia accused herself of want of thought, that she had not made the first application to her, which might probably have saved her the trouble of the rest: but, alas! she had not time to communicate to her the intent of her visit, before she had reason to suspect it would be of little purpose: she received her indeed with all the civilities due to a lady of her quality and character, but yet there might be seen a sort of peevishness in all her air, which denoted she was far from being perfectly at ease; which Miramillia perceiving, asked if she was well; and that question presently informed her how much fame had deceived her in reporting this lady for a woman of so much good hu-

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mour. I am not at all surprized, madam, answered she, that you should take me to be indisposed; not that I think I am at all altered since you saw me last, but the prodigious charms of Ismenia make too great an eclat to suffer any other woman to be thought tolerable. It would be impossible to represent the surprize in which these words involved the person to whom they were addressed; she knew, indeed, there was a lady called Ismenia; that she was the daughter of a senator, and esteemed a very lovely maid; but what concern this should be of Claribella's, or why she should name her to a person who had not the least acquaintance with her, she could not imagine: to ease herself, therefore, of this perplexity, As I am ignorant, said she, of any of the affairs of that lady, I cannot guess of what consequence her beauty can be to you.---Pardon me, madam, resumed the other, your late griefs have, perhaps, made you regardless of the news of the town, else it is impossible but you must have heard the vast reputation Ismenia has acquired by the death of Charino.---You would oblige me with the relation of it, said Miramillia; for I assure you I never heard it mentioned, though I had formerly some acquaintance with Charino, and looked on him as a most accomplished gentleman.---He was so, replied Claribella; and no doubt, but if he had made his application, might have been thought well of by women of great distinction than Ismenia: but what he saw in her, Heaven knows! to inspire him with so prodigious a passion; the more he adored, the more she insulted. I never saw any thing in my life arrive at that monstrous height of vanity she did; nor a man, especially one who had sense too, degenerate to so low and mean a submission as did Charino: he was like her shadow, followed her wherever she went, talked of her in all company as of the most lovely creature in the world. Thus it went on between them for about three months, at the end of which, she continuing to use him ill, he shot himself through the head, leaving a letter behind him,

him, to acquaint the world for what cause he did it. Since this demonstration of her power, there is no enduring Ismenia; she is grown so assuming, that it is impossible to converse with her; and yet you cannot imagine how much she is admired by the men. I suppose they think, because one has been fool enough to die for her, that she really deserves to be cried up in the manner she is; in fine, there is nothing now talked of in town but her beauty; she is the general toast; and it is looked on as folly or envy not to join in the ridiculous praises which are given her.---This is the first time I ever heard of this adventure, said Miramillia, and am extremely sorry that Charino should have so small a sense of the duties of religion, and so poignant a one of a foolish passion. But I cannot see why you should be discontented at it, any farther than common compassion for the untimely death of so agreeable a chevalier. If Ismenia has stupidity enough to be pleased with so fatal an effect of her charms, and is induced by her vanity to behave in the manner you describe, it is easy to break off all acquaintance with her; for my part, though I am concerned when I see any of my sex give way to foibles of that kind, I think it not my duty to afflict myself for what I cannot prevent, nor happens through any fault of mine.---But can I stop my ears from the encomiums with which I am perpetually persecuted? cried Claribella. Can any thing be more provoking, than to see mankind so much bewitched to a creature, that, in my opinion, has no one good quality to attract their admiration? Does not the whole world run mad after her, worship her as a goddess? The meanest of the people, unblest with opportunity to view the mighty wonder near, stand in the street in throngs, watching her coming out, then croud about her chariot, crying, How fair she is! How exquisitely charming! Wherever she goes, all eyes are fixed upon her; all tongues seem to outvie each other in her praise, as if the folly of Charino had spread its infection through all the race of man.

man. No, certainly, replied Miramillia, (with a half smile, now plainly perceiving the cause of her disquiet) not through all, I dare say; you have your admirers, who confess your power of charming. --- Coxcombs! wretches all! resumed the fair votary of envy, what avails their pretending a passion for me, when they do nothing to attest it to the world? Oh, Miramillia! a woman gains more glory to have one man die for her, than to have a thousand live and languish at her feet. It was not all Charino could say or swear, that set up the fame of Ismenia; but in that one action, his death, he has recorded the force of her charms to all posterity. Heavens! how fortunate some women are, and how much the contrary others! Notwithstanding my great estate, allowed good qualities, and birth, I pass for nothing in the esteem of the world, am unregarded, slighted; and yet, without my glass extremely deceives me, she is far from having the pre-eminence over me, either in face or shape. Good God! how is it possible to be contented under such visible partiality? She had not, perhaps, given over her exclamations for a much longer time, had the torrent of her tears allowed the power of farther speech: nor could Miramillia offer any thing to interrupt her, so greatly was she amazed that a woman, endued with good sense in other things, should so much suffer it to be debased by her excessive vanity, and desire of admiration. But perceiving she had left off speaking, she could not forbear mixing some grave-reproofs with her consolations; she begged her to consider how little essential to true happiness was the being accounted beautiful, and how much better it was to be sincerely loved by one worthy man, than to have the noisy encomiums of the whole sex; and at the same time reminded her, that nothing was more an argument of a mean and ungenerous soul than to envy another, either for real or imaginary perfections. But how little effect such kind of discourses were able to work on her, any one, who in the course of their life has met with a

woman.

woman of Claribella's temper, may easily believe. She said nothing, however, in opposition to her persuasions; but the other finding little hopes of making a convert of her, shortened her visit, and departed with a perfect indignation in her mind, that persons, whom Heaven designed to bless, should, by their own perverseness of disposition, render themselves unhappy. But her own misfortunes hindering her from giving too much attention to the calamities of others, whether real or imaginary, she resolved to make yet one more essay.

Selinda was a young lady very much celebrated for an uncommon share of wit and understanding; and being endowed with every thing she could wish for in life, she imagined not that such a one would discontent herself with any fancied ills. To her therefore she resolved to apply, and in a few days made her a visit, with all that form which is made use of among people who live in the great world, and are not sufficiently acquainted with each other, to have made a mutual agreement to throw off those tiresome and indeed unnecessary ceremonies.

But she was soon convinced how much she was deceived in her expectations here; for desiring to speak with her, the chief attendant, with air affected, and all that mimicry of good breeding which those sort of people abound with, told her, that her lady could by no means appear; that her favourite lap-dog had died of an apoplexy some few days ago, and she was inconsolable for so great a misfortune; but that as soon as she saw company, she was very certain she would think herself favoured in a visit from her. This put Miramillia beyond all patience: Heavens! cried she to herself, are all our sex devoted to disquiet? Is there a fate upon us to be wretched? Must we labour under woes of our own formation, when Fortune contributes all she can to make us happy? Good God! continued she, that even wit is not a defence from vanity and affectation! Thus, like Amalia, Clorilla and Claribella, do we torment ourselves with childish and imaginary
ills,

ills, till taught by real ones how mad we have been, and wish the past could be again recalled.

These reflections induced our afflicted mother to return to her house, with a firm resolution to give over an enquiry which she was now convinced would be altogether fruitless, and depend wholly on Heaven for the restoration of her peace; either by hearing of her dear son, or by obtaining a stock of patience to support the uncertainty.

She had not fixed this determination many days, before she found the good effects of it: that son, whose absence she had so long deplored, and who nobody now believed was in the world, was, when she least expected it, returned to her embraces. A coach-and-six, containing the young Adario, so he was called, a grave old gentleman, and a most beautiful virgin, came to her gate. The transport she was in to behold once more that darling of her soul, left her not the power of observing by whom he was accompanied: she hung upon his neck; she clasped him with raptures, such as only mothers know; she gazed on him with an agony of pleasure; for a long time she could bring no other words, than, My son! My son! Adario! My dear Adario! But extasy at length giving way to reflection: Where have you been? she cried, and why, by your absence and your silence, have you involved me in griefs which have been very near fatal to me?—Oh pardon the transgression of my seeming neglect, best of parents, and of women, answered he; but as it is to this gentleman you are indebted for my life, be pleased to hear from his mouth my vindication. These words making her turn her eyes on the company, she immediately knew the person he mentioned to be signior Clotario, one who had been the most passionate of her adorers, when in a virgin state; but being rejected by her for the father of Adario, his despair had made him several times attempt the life of that more happy rival, for which there had ever since remained an extreme hatred between the families;

lies ; but to be told that he had been instrumental in preserving Adario, chased from her breast all sentiments but those of gratitude : she received him with all civility ; and being told by him, that the young lady who came with him was his daughter, made her all the compliments her beauty and fine air demanded from as many as saw her. After which, being impatient to know by what means they had become acquainted with her son, she pressed for the gratification of that desire ; and Clotario, pleased to oblige, began in this manner :

THE HISTORY OF FELICIA AND ADARIO.

THIS young girl, said he, pointing to Felicia, is the only child I ever had by a lady who, after Miramillia, seemed most worthy of my affections ; but the present she had made me of her, proved fatal to herself : she died in child-bed ; and though I was extremely afflicted for her loss, I thought it would better become the love I bore her, to transplant it to the dear pledge she left me, than to waste my whole thoughts on what was not to be recovered by all my cares. Few fathers regard their children with that tenderness I have ever done Felicia, and to do her justice, none ever seemed more to deserve it. When grown to an age to be sensible of my indulgence and her own duty, she made it all her study to let me see the one was not thrown away, by her strict observance of the other. I shall pass over in silence the improvements she made in all the accomplishments I thought it proper she should be instructed in, lest you should imagine I consider her with too partial an opinion. Such as she is, however, the noblest chevaliers in the country solicited my consent to obtain her in marriage ; but she appeared so far
from

from having any inclination to enter into that state, that she entreated me with the utmost earnestness to permit her to remain as she was. I loved her too well to press her to any thing she disliked, and assured her I would never exert my authority in that point, unless I should see her agitated with a blind passion for one unworthy of her; she protested, she would never entertain the least emotions of that kind, without first knowing if I was willing she should indulge them; and I observed in her so much discretion in other things, that I made no scruple of believing her. I depended entirely on her conduct, and was free from those corroding cares which so much perplex the generality of fathers. But the greater my imagined security, the greater my disappointment, when I had reason to believe myself deceived. One morning, surprized that she came not to pay her usual testimonies of obedience, I sent to her chamber to enquire her health, and was informed that she went early into the fields, accompanied by a young man called Ferronese, the son of a person who had formerly been a servant to me. I was not pleased to hear she was gone out so attended; not that I thought she could be inspired with any affection for a man so much beneath her; but that having heard a bad character of him, I suspected he might be employed as an emissary from some other, whom I was certain I should not approve, thus recommended. I was just sending to order she should return, when a poor man, who happened to be at work in the grounds, came running almost out of breath to inform me, he had seen Ferronese on horseback with Felicia before him, who shrieking and crying out for help, plainly testified she had no hand in her own rape. I demanded which way they went, and having been informed, made my servants immediately mount in their pursuit. They obeyed with diligence, and were so successful in their search, that in the forest of Adorno, behind your castle, they found my daughter rending the air with cries; and standing between two persons who
seemed

seemed dead, or dying; one of them was the false Ferronese, and the other her valiant defender, the gallant Adario: but his name or person being utterly a stranger to her, she told them, that as it was to that brave unknown she was indebted for the preservation of her honour, she should think herself the most ungrateful of women, if she did not use her utmost endeavours to bring him out of a condition in which he fell but for her sake. She added, That there were signs of life in him, and therefore ordered some of the men to ride with all speed to the next town for a litter; while she endeavoured, as well as she could, to bind his wounds. Her commands being obeyed, he was brought in that manner to my house; where the truth being related to me; I commended her behaviour, and was no less zealous than she had been, to save the life of a person to whom I was obliged for the restoration and protection of my child. The surgeons no sooner looked on his wounds, than they informed me none of them were mortal, and that his only danger consisted in loss of blood, and having lain so long. They gave me hopes, however, of his life, and nothing was omitted which might prevent the disappointment of those hopes. In a few hours he opened his eyes, and soon after had the use of speech; but we forbore asking him any questions, being told, that nothing would be so prejudicial to him as noise or light. We exactly observed the orders given us by those to whom we committed the care of him; but I could not avoid taking notice that Felicia enquired of his health, with a concern which seemed to have in it something more than gratitude. When she related how bravely he had fought in her relief, and with what courage and gallantry he flew, in the defence of her chastity, on the villain who attempted it, her eyes sparkled with fire I had never seen in them before. She seemed agitated with an unusual warmth. She took pleasure in repeating the tale whenever she had an opportunity. She was transported at the hopes given
her

her of his recovery: she could not conceal her disorders whenever any suspicious words were let fall, that it was dubious: in fine, her very look and action expressed a tenderness which made me tremble. Pardon me, excellent Miramillia, I knew him not for Adario; and though, even in that dismal state, I perceived enough about him, to believe him not unworthy of her; yet the uncertainty whether he might look on her with the same eyes, or indeed might be in a condition to return her affection, made me fear she should place it on him. I concealed my sentiments; however, till I should be more assured, judging with reason, that if my conjectures were true, she would be more wary in her behaviour before me. The great skill and care that was employed, in a week's time relieved us from the fears of the death of our guest, and the young Felicia could not conceal a joy at the news, which heightened my suspicions. It was more than a month, however, before we were permitted to speak to him, and then no more than to testify our zeal for his recovery, so extremely weak was his condition. We were told by the persons employed to watch with him, that the chief use he made of his recovered speech, was, first, to enquire in whose house he was; and being told it belonged to the person in whose daughter's cause he had received those wounds, he expressed the utmost satisfaction; but that on the hearing my name, it visibly abated, and he seemed rather troubled, than the contrary, to receive any obligations from Clotario. He could not, however, refrain asking many questions concerning Felicia; such as what solicitations she had for marriage, who were the pretenders to her, which of them she seemed most to favour, or to whom I was inclined to dispose of her, by what means she came to be exposed to the danger from which he had delivered her? All which being answered according to the direct truth, they said he expressed an infinity of pleasure, to hear she was not yet engaged either by duty or inclination. I could

could not be told these things, without believing the same sentiments had inspired them both; and having myself, as you very well know, madam, experienced the force of love, sincerely wished he might be of such a quality as might not render their's unfortunate, which I very much feared, because of the regret with which he heard of her's. Admittance at last being allowed, I went to visit him, taking Felicia with me; decency and gratitude I thought obliging her to pay this respect to one to whom she was indebted for all that was most dear to her: I imagined also, that by being present at this interview, I should be able to assure myself of the sentiments of them both, more fully, perhaps, than any other way; and indeed there required but little penetration to read in their countenances what passed in their hearts. Their affection for each other was as apparent as the care they took to conceal it; nor can I say, that I was much troubled at it; there was something in the face and voice of Adario that insensibly attached me to him. I did not indeed, Miramillia, think of you at that time, much less imagine that this noble youth was your son; yet it is certain, that great resemblance he has to a form which had been once so dear to me; it was that filled me with impressions so much in his favour. The first civilities being over, I desired him to let me know to whom I had been so much obliged; but never did I see so sudden and so strange an alteration as appeared in him at this demand. That extreme paleness, which the weakness of his condition had spread over his face, now gave way to a flushing red; it seemed as if his whole little remains of blood had forsok all other parts to paint his blushing cheeks. His lips trembled as he was about to make reply, nor could he presently bring forth a word; but when he did, it was in this manner: How easy were it for me, said he, to impose on your belief, by giving myself a name to which I have no pretence! But know, my lord, that whatever I am, I was bred to hate deceit; and as there

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is an unfurmountable reason for my concealing from what family I am descended; think it a less misfortune to run the hazard of passing in your esteem, as a person who has done something, for which he is afraid or ashamed to own himself for what he is, than to be conscious of a crime like falsehood. This only (continued he) I entreat you to believe of me, that I am wholly devoted to your service, and am so far from regretting that in it I have spent part of my blood, that I would gladly shed the remainder on the same account, and bless Heaven for nothing more earnestly, than that I have been the happy instrument of restoring the admirable Felicia to your embraces. Here he ceased to speak, and the astonishment his words involved me in, left me not the power of making him an immediate answer; I was confounded, I knew not what to think, I could not believe he was of a birth inferior to what his pride would make him wish to be thought; there was something so noble in his air and countenance, as presently checked all suggestions of that kind. Nor could I imagine he had been guilty of any thing which should oblige him to conceal himself: that galant freedom with which he spoke, and that love of truth which he preferred to all things, made me conceive the highest opinion of his honour, and his justice: in fine, what he said was both pleasing and disturbing to me; I admired him more than I had done, but was more fearful than I had been, lest Felicia should do so too. When the tumults of my thoughts would give me leave, I told him, that the obligations I was under to him, forbade I should press to know any thing he was unwilling to reveal; nor, as I had done nothing to deserve his confidence, could not take it ill that he refused it me. However, pursued I, before we part, you may perhaps have a better opinion of my discretion and my gratitude; and as a proof that you are desirous to make trial of both, I beg you will command every thing in this house, with the same freedom as you would your
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own. He made no other reply to these words than bowing his head, for he had not yet recovered strength enough to move his body in the least; after this we began to talk of the villainy of Ferronese, and the little security a young woman can have out of the presence of those whom duty and nature oblige to be tender of her honour. Felicia excused her going into the field with him, by saying he told her, there was that moment a great mountain raised at the end of it in that night, which he imagined had been done by an earthquake; she added, that not having the least suspicion that he had any design on her, nor could apprehend a danger of any kind so near the house, she had run out to see this wonder, at the garden-gate which led to the field, and happened to be then open; but that she was no sooner out of hearing, than she perceived a horse tied by the bridle to a tree, on which he mounted, taking her by force in his arms, and making no stop till he came to that wood, where Adario found him ready to sacrifice her honour to a passion she would not consent to gratify by marriage with him. I observed, while Felicia was relating to Adario the means by which she was carried away, she took a more than ordinary pains in excusing her inadvertency; and this served to convince me more, that she was in reality as sensible of the tender passion as it is possible for a young heart to be. We continued in the chamber till a certain faintness, which his countenance, in spite of him, betrayed, reminded me that we had put him on the necessity of speaking more than his strength would bear; and indeed the Surgeon found him so disordered at his next visit, that he desired we would forbear any further conversation with him for a good while. It was near another month before we were suffered to go into his chamber, any farther than the door, to enquire after his health, which I constantly did every day. But I took notice, that after this, Felicia grew extremely melancholy, and at last so pale, and her whole air so dejected,

jected, that she was scarcely to be known: I guessed, that this change in her proceeded from the endeavours she made to conquer the passion she had entertained for a person who was resolved to continue a stranger to her; and to forward her cure, sent her to the house of a sister of mine, who had many children of much the same age with herself, in whose society I hoped her melancholy might abate: I perceived an unwillingness in her to go, but not so much as offered any thing in opposition to it. But she had not been there many days before my sister sent her back, fearing some sad effect of her distemper, which, from the moment she left home, had increased by such swift degrees, that at her return she seemed but like the spectre of the once gay Felicia. Adario too, on hearing she was gone, fell into convulsions, which were near being fatal to him; this new disorder, however, retarded his recovery so much, that it was near four months before he was able to walk about his chamber. I was so greatly affected with their mutual distress, that I resolved to relieve it, if by any means I could: but neither of them having declared their sentiments to me, I was at a loss how to break the knowledge I had of them, either to the one or the other. My concern for my child, whom I saw almost at the point of death, made me at last cast aside all scruples. I revealed to her the discovery I had made, and perceiving she was in a confusion scarce supportable, I endeavoured to comfort her, and told her it was no breach of modesty for a young maid to be charmed with merit such as our guest appeared to be master of. I assured her also, that I saw the same passion working as powerfully in his soul as in her's, and that if there was no greater impediment than I could yet foresee, marriage should, in a small time, complete their mutual wishes. The answers she made were but short, and consisted only in thanks for the tenderness I expressed for her repose; yet could I plainly discern the greatest
indulgence

Indulgence on any other score would have availed but little to the recovery of her peace.

From her I went to the chamber of Adario, whom I found extremely pensive; I would not, as yet, take any notice to him of my design, being desirous of seeing if he would reveal to Felicia more than he was willing to do to me: to accomplish which intent, I ordered dinner to be served in his chamber, seeing he was now in a condition to endure company. This was done every day; and sometimes pretending sudden business, I would retire, on purpose to give him the liberty of explaining himself, if he had courage to do so. I questioned my daughter concerning his behaviour, and she with blushes at last confessed, that he had declared himself her lover; that having told him she could not, without breach of modesty, accept of any proposals of that kind from a person, who, while he made an offer of his heart, concealed his name; he assured her, that his quality was not inferior to hers; but that, when she pressed him to make it known, he only sighed, and turned his head away. I need not repeat the trouble I was in at this latter part of the account. You may believe, on the one side, I was infinitely concerned at the despair of a child so dear to me; and, on the other, could not think of giving her to a man, from whom nothing could draw the secret of his birth. After a long consideration, I commanded Felicia to inform him, she would listen no farther to the declarations he ceased not to make her, nor on any terms believe his pretensions were such as were consistent with honour, unless he made them known to me, and also from what parents he derived his being. She obeyed, and he appeared in all the confusion imaginable; he told her, that he had not the least hope of succeeding; that all the reason he had so long concealed himself was, that he was certain of losing all that good-will the service he had done me had acquired, when once that fatal secret should be discovered:—There is, said he, an enmity

between our parents, which, on the side of yours, I fear will never cease. But why should I delay your attention? He, at length, was prevailed on to discover himself your son; which I was no sooner made acquainted with, than I felt a transport which no tongue is able to express.---The merits of Adario seemed now to shine with double lustre, when I knew they were derived from Miramillia. Miramillia! whom I have never ceased to admire, even when my rash despair made me attempt the life of the man most dear to her: I flew immediately to Adario, I embraced him with all the demonstration of a paternal affection, assuring him, I should think myself blessed in making him my son. There remains, said I, but one impediment to our common satisfaction, the consent of your excellent mother, her forgiveness of a crime, which I have since severely repented of, and vouchsafing to join your hands. Adario returned my endearments as became his affection to my daughter, and gave me hopes you would not be less bounteous to his wishes than I had been,

Thus, madam, continued he, have you heard the history of a passion, which, as violent as it is, has not transported the persons influenced by it to act any thing contrary to duty, or to honour; all the tenderness Felicia has been so fortunate to inspire in the soul of Adario, has never made him once intreat the gratification of his desires, till authorized by your permission. If then the mutual love of these darlings of the hearts of us both, can be of any power to move you; or the sincere penitence of Clotario mitigate the guilt of his former rashness, behold I join in their submissions, and intreat you will not be refractory to their wishes.

Here ceased Clotario to speak; and taking Adario in one hand, and Felicia in the other, they all three fell on their knees before Miramillia; who expressing some confusion to see Clotario in that posture, first raised him in the most obliging manner, then embraced Felicia and Adario with a tenderness, which denoted she would be

far

far from opposing their desires ; which she soon after ratified by her words.

Thus was this house of mourning now converted to a proportionable joy : not only Felicia, but Clotario, she obliged to have apartments with her, till preparations were made for the marriage, which was soon after completed, to the unspeakable satisfaction of all who were concerned in it.

END of the SECOND VOLUME,





